

# **The Conservation and Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings: An Evaluation Based on the Pennine Uplands**

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**This thesis is submitted in fulfilment of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in  
Town and Country Planning**

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## Abstract

The conservation and conversion of traditional farm buildings (TFBs) has become an important issue in the British countryside. This is because it represents a physical manifestation of a number of processes which are presently influencing rural areas. Changes in farming systems brought about under the influence of European Community (EC) farm policies have increased the number of TFBs which are available for conservation and conversion. Reduced production subsidies to agriculture have stimulated efforts to find alternative methods of supporting farm businesses. A number of these options involve TFBs.

The adverse effects of agricultural recession combined with an increased government emphasis on private enterprise, has resulted in greater pressure to stimulate rural development sometimes involving the use of TFBs.

Conservation and conversion of TFBs has been further encouraged by rural social changes most notably rural in-migration which has created pressure for residential conversions.

In addition to pressure for development, there has been an increased awareness of the heritage value of TFBs as conservation has become a mainstream political issue.

The thesis evaluates TFBs in the Pennines both as structures in their own right and in terms of conservation and conversion. The ultimate aim is to assess the relative merits of the various options available for TFBs in the Pennines.

The research outlines 'the resource' of TFBs available in the Pennines, before it goes on to consider the conservation and conversion options available. Four inter-dependant sources of research evidence are utilised: questionnaires of farmers, questionnaires of local planning authorities, site visits and interview material.

The main elements of research are drawn together into a comprehensive evaluation of the conservation and conversion of TFBs in the Pennines, thus enabling conclusions and recommendations to be developed principally: what is the true value of the conservation and conversion of TFBs; how practice can be made to achieve policy aims and how policy aims need to be adjusted to fit the reality as demonstrated in the Pennines.



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## Abbreviations

ACRE	Action with Communities in Rural Areas
ADAS	Agricultural Development and Advisory Service
AIS	Agricultural Improvement Scheme
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
ACC	Association of County Councils
BWCS	Barns and Walls Conservation Scheme
B.C.	Borough Council
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CC	Countryside Commission
CPRE	Council for the Protection of Rural England
CLA	Country Landowners Association
C.C.	County Council
DOE	Department of the Environment
D.C.	District Council
ETB	English Tourist Board
ESA	Environmentally Sensitive Area
EC	European Community (EEC)
FCGS	Farm and Conservation Grant Scheme
FDS	Farm Diversification Scheme
HFBG	Historic Farm Buildings Group
ITE	Institute of Terrestrial Ecology
LFA	Less Favoured Area
LPA	Local Planning Authority
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food
NFU	National Farmers Union
NP	National Park
PPG	Planning Policy Guidance
RDA	Rural Development Area

<b>RDC</b>	<b>Rural Development Commission</b>
<b>TDAP</b>	<b>Tourism Development Action Programme</b>
<b>TFB</b>	<b>Traditional Farm Building</b>

Contents

	Page
Abstract . . . . .	i
Acknowledgements . . . . .	ii
Abbreviations . . . . .	iii
 <b>Chapter One: Introduction</b>	 <b>Page</b>
1.1        Subject Outline . . . . .	2
1.2        Development of the Subject . . . . .	2
1.3        Background to the Subject . . . . .	4
1.3.1      The Farm Level . . . . .	5
1.4        Aims and Objectives . . . . .	5
1.4.1      Hypotheses . . . . .	6
1.4.2      Fundamental Questions . . . . .	6
1.4.3      Underlying Assumptions . . . . .	7
1.5        Structure of the Thesis . . . . .	8
1.6        Applications of the Thesis . . . . .	10
 <b>Chapter 2: Methodology</b>	 <b>Page</b>
2.1        Introduction . . . . .	13
2.2        Terminology . . . . .	13
2.2.1      Conservation . . . . .	13
2.2.2      Conversion . . . . .	14
2.2.3      Redundant . . . . .	14
2.2.4      Traditional Building . . . . .	15
2.2.5      Farm Building . . . . .	15
2.2.6      Modern Farm Buildings . . . . .	16
2.3        Boundaries of the Research . . . . .	16
2.3.1      Geographical Boundaries: The Pennines . . . . .	16
2.3.2      Cheviots . . . . .	17
2.3.3      North Pennines . . . . .	17
2.3.4      Yorkshire Dales . . . . .	18
2.3.5      South Pennines . . . . .	18
2.3.6      Peak District . . . . .	19
2.3.7      Tynedale District . . . . .	20

2.4	Topical Boundaries . . . . .	20
2.5	Temporal Boundaries . . . . .	21
2.6	Development of a Research Framework . . . . .	21
2.6.1	Existing Methodologies . . . . .	21
2.6.2	Framework . . . . .	22
2.6.2.1	Subject Structure . . . . .	22
2.6.2.2	Philosophical Base . . . . .	23
2.6.2.3	Methodological Approaches . . . . .	25
2.7	Research Techniques . . . . .	26
2.7.1	Farmer Questionnaire . . . . .	27
2.7.2	Local Planning Authority Questionnaire . . . . .	28
2.7.3	Semi-structured Interviews . . . . .	29
2.7.4	Case Studies . . . . .	30
2.7.5	Computer and Statistical Techniques . . . . .	31
2.8	Justifying the Methodology . . . . .	32
2.9	Summary . . . . .	33

<b>Chapter 3: Essential References</b>		<b>Page</b>
3.1	Introduction . . . . .	36
3.2	Subject Development . . . . .	36
3.3	Conservation and Conversion of TFBs . . . . .	41
3.3.1	General Texts . . . . .	41
3.3.2	Resource Based Literature . . . . .	43
3.3.3	Policy Based Literature . . . . .	44
3.3.4	Specific Initiatives . . . . .	46
3.4	Summary . . . . .	47



Chapter 4: The Agricultural Context		Page
4.1	Introduction . . . . .	50
4.2	Agriculture Before 1900 . . . . .	50
4.3	Agriculture 1900 to 1939 . . . . .	53
4.4	World War Two . . . . .	55
4.5	1945 to 1980 . . . . .	56
4.6	1980 Onwards . . . . .	58
4.7	The Recessions of 1870-1930's and 1980's: A Comparison . . . . .	61
4.8	British Response: Agricultural Adjustment . . . . .	62
Chapter 5: Traditional Farm Buildings: the Resource		Page
5.1	Introduction . . . . .	70
5.2	Characteristics of Traditional Farm Buildings . . . . .	70
5.3	Vernacular and Polite Thresholds . . . . .	71
5.4	The Nature of the Resource . . . . .	72
5.4.1	Barns . . . . .	72
5.4.2	Bank Barns . . . . .	73
5.4.3	Field Barns . . . . .	74
5.4.4	Cow Houses . . . . .	75
5.4.5	Granary/ Cartshed . . . . .	75
5.4.6	Stable . . . . .	76
5.4.7	Other . . . . .	76
5.4.8	Composite Designs . . . . .	77
5.5	Non Vernacular Buildings . . . . .	78
5.6	The Resource: An Evaluation . . . . .	79
5.6.1	Regionality in the Resource . . . . .	80
5.6.2	A Case Study: Wensleydale . . . . .	81
5.7	Why is there Redundancy? . . . . .	83
5.8	Summary . . . . .	85

<b>Chapter 6: Conversion</b>	<b>Page</b>
6.1	Introduction . . . . . 89
6.2	Incentives for Conversion . . . . . 90
6.3	Considerations in Conversion . . . . . 92
6.3.1	Landscape Conservation . . . . . 93
6.3.2	Economic Considerations . . . . . 95
6.3.3	Benefits to the Local Economy . . . . . 96
6.3.3.1	Types of Benefit Envisaged . . . . . 97
6.4	Practical Considerations in Conversion . . . . . 98
6.4.1	Planning Considerations . . . . . 98
6.4.1.1	What Needs Planning Permission . . . . . 99
6.4.2	Design Considerations . . . . . 100
6.4.2.1	Building Regulations . . . . . 101
6.4.2.2	Practical Design . . . . . 103
6.4.2.3	Structural Factors . . . . . 104
6.4.3	Financial Considerations . . . . . 105
6.4.3.1	Sources of Finance . . . . . 105
6.4.3.2	Costing Out the Options . . . . . 107
6.4.4	Labour Resources . . . . . 109
6.4.5	Land Resources . . . . . 109
6.4.6	Locational Factors . . . . . 111
6.5	The Options . . . . . 113
6.5.1	Residential Conversion . . . . . 114
6.5.1.1	Residential Conversions in the Pennines . . . . . 115
6.5.1.2	Case Studies . . . . . 116
6.5.2	Tourist Accommodation . . . . . 117
6.5.2.1	Case Studies . . . . . 118
6.5.3	Conversion for Business Use . . . . . 123
6.5.3.1	Case Studies . . . . . 124
6.5.4	Other Conversions . . . . . 126
6.6	Policy Aims and The Realities of Conversion . . . . . 126
6.6.1	The Main Policy Stances . . . . . 127
6.6.1.1	Central Government . . . . . 127
6.6.1.2	Development Agencies . . . . . 129
6.6.1.3	Countryside Agencies . . . . . 130
6.6.1.4	Farming Lobby . . . . . 131
6.6.1.5	Conservation Lobby . . . . . 132
6.6.2	The Realities of Conversion . . . . . 133
6.6.2.1	Local Implementation of National Planning Policy Guidance . . . . . 133
6.6.2.2	The Practice of Conversion . . . . . 136
6.7	Summary . . . . . 137

Chapter 7: Conservation		Page
7.1	Setting the Context . . . . .	144
7.2	A Definition . . . . .	144
7.3	The Emergence of Farm Building Conservation . . . . .	145
7.3.1	The Motives Behind Conservation . . . . .	147
7.4	How to Conserve . . . . .	149
7.4.1	Agricultural Uses . . . . .	149
7.4.2	Traditional Farm Buildings in Modern Agriculture: The Advantages . . . . .	150
7.4.3	Traditional Farm Buildings in Modern Agriculture: The Problems . . . . .	151
7.4.4	Maintenance . . . . .	152
7.4.5	Financial Aid . . . . .	154
7.4.6	Agricultural Use: A Summary . . . . .	154
7.5	The Preservationist Approach . . . . .	155
7.5.1	Environmentally Sensitive Areas . . . . .	155
7.5.1.1	The Pennine Dales ESA . . . . .	156
7.5.2	The Barns and Walls Conservation Scheme . . . . .	157
7.5.3	Other Preservationist Approaches . . . . .	158
7.6	The Philosophy of Conservation . . . . .	159

Chapter 8: The Value of Traditional Farm Buildings		Page
8.1	Introduction . . . . .	163
8.2	On-Farm Values . . . . .	164
8.2.1	Agricultural Use . . . . .	165
8.2.2	Conversion . . . . .	167
8.3	Wider Economic Value of Conversions . . . . .	169
8.3.1	Direct Benefits . . . . .	169
8.3.2	Indirect Benefits . . . . .	170
8.3.3	Relationship Between Conversion and New Development . . . . .	171
8.4	An Economic Appraisal of Conversion . . . . .	173
8.4.1	Individual Level . . . . .	173
8.4.2	Regional Level: The Pennines . . . . .	176
8.5	Historic Value . . . . .	177
8.6	Architectural Value . . . . .	179
8.6.1	Listed Farm Buildings: A Measurement of Heritage Value . . . . .	181
8.7	Educational Value . . . . .	182
8.8	Landscape Value . . . . .	183
8.8.1	Farmed Landscape as an Economic Stimulus . . . . .	185
8.8.2	Traditional Farm Buildings in the Landscape . . . . .	187
8.8.3	Artistic Value . . . . .	189
8.9	Philosophical Value . . . . .	190
8.9.1	Values of Association . . . . .	191
8.9.2	Ethics . . . . .	192
8.9.2.1	Antiquarian Prejudice . . . . .	192
8.9.2.2	Authenticity . . . . .	193
8.9.3	Ambience . . . . .	194
8.10	Summary . . . . .	194

Chapter 9: Conclusion		Page
9.1	Introduction . . . . .	200
9.2	The Conservation and Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings in the Pennines: A Summary . . . . .	200
9.3	The Relationship Between Conservation and Conversion . . . . .	203
9.4	An Evaluation of the Conservation and Conversion of TFBs . . . . .	205
9.4.1	The Conservation and Conversion of TFBs in the Pennines Needs to be Valued on Aesthetic, Philosophical and Social Criteria as Well as By Economic Factors . . . . .	205
9.4.2	TFBs Have Both Intrinsic and Use Values Which Make Their Conservation Desirable Even Without a Positive Use . . . . .	213
9.4.3	The Conservation and Conversion of TFBs in the Pennines has Value at a Farm, Area, Regional and National Level . . . . .	216
9.5	Summary of Evaluation . . . . .	221
9.6	Recommendations . . . . .	224
9.6.1	The Basis of Policy and Practice . . . . .	224
9.6.2	The Operation of Policy and Practice . . . . .	225
Appendices		Page
A. Survey Region . . . . .		228
B. Farmer Questionnaires . . . . .		230
C. Local Planning Authority Questionnaires . . . . .		237
D. Interviews . . . . .		243
E. Site Visits . . . . .		245
F. Camping Barn Feasibility Study . . . . .		247
G. Farm Diversification Scheme Data . . . . .		248
H. Listed Farm Buildings . . . . .		253
I. The Direct Economic Benefits of Conversion . . . . .		255
Bibliography . . . . .		260



List of Figures		After Page
1.1	Background to the Subject . . . . .	4
2.1	Size of Areas . . . . .	17
2.2	Mean Farm Size . . . . .	17
2.3	Decision Making in Conservation and Conversion: The Farm Level . . . . .	22
2.4	Internal and External Factors Affecting Decisions on Conservation and Conversion . . . . .	22
2.5	Processes Behind Decision Making in the Conservation and Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings (TFBs) . . . . .	23
2.6	Example of the 'Levels of Research': The Conservation of TFBs . . . . .	26
2.7	Research Framework . . . . .	26
5.1	The Vernacular Threshold - TFBs . . . . .	71
5.2	Basic Internal Form of Barns . . . . .	72
5.3	Bank Barn Design . . . . .	73
5.4	Common Farmstead Layouts . . . . .	76
5.5	Buildings Available for Conversion: Pennines . . . . .	79
5.6	Regional Distribution of Redundant Barns . . . . .	80
5.7	Regional Distribution of Barns with Conversion Potential . . . . .	80
5.8	Reasons for Redundancy in the Pennines . . . . .	83
6.1	Incentives to Convert . . . . .	90
6.2	Incentives to Convert: Pennine Areas . . . . .	90
6.3	Considerations in Conversion: Pennine Farmers . . . . .	92
6.4	Considerations in Conversion: Pennine Areas . . . . .	92
6.5	Respondents Who Considered That Designated Areas Constrained Barn Conversions . . . . .	92
6.6	Considerations in Conversion: Pennine LPAs . . . . .	95
6.7	Occupancy of Residential Conversions: The Options . . . . .	113
6.8	Types of Conversion in the Pennines . . . . .	113
6.9	Number of Planning Applications: Residential Conversions Tynedale District 1981-1990 . . . . .	114
6.10	Mean Size of Residential Conversion Application: Tynedale District 1981-1990 . . . . .	114
6.11	Farm Diversification Scheme Approved Schemes . . . . .	122
7.1	Conservation and Conversion of TFBs: The Process . . . . .	159
8.1	The Value of TFBs . . . . .	163
8.2	The Indirect Economic Benefits from Conservation and Conversion . . . . .	170
8.3	Regional Densities of Listed Farm Buildings . . . . .	181
8.4	Types of Listed Buildings: Derbyshire Dales . . . . .	181
8.5	Characteristics Appreciated By Visitors to the Peak National Park . . . . .	185
8.6	The Relationship Between the Built and Natural Environments . . . . .	187

9.1	The True Value of TFBs Before and After Conservation and Conversion . . . . .	204
9.2	Farmer Survey Returns . . . . .	231
9.3	Area Representation . . . . .	231
9.4	Area Returns (%) . . . . .	232

## List of Tables

## After Page

1.1	Major Underlying Assumptions . . . . .	7
2.1	The 'Levels' of Study Relating to TFBs . . . . .	25
4.1	Major Agricultural Events Influencing the Conservation and Conversion of TFBs . . . . .	50
4.2	Major Non-Agricultural Events Which Have Influenced the Conservation and Conversion of TFBs . . . . .	50
5.1	Classifications of TFBs . . . . .	72
5.2	Relationship Between Redundant Buildings and Those Seen to Have Conversion Potential . . . . .	79
5.3	Regional Distribution of Redundant Barns . . . . .	80
5.4	Regional Distribution of Barns with Conversion Potential . . . . .	80
5.5	Barns Survey in Wensleydale . . . . .	81
6.1	Accessibility of Conversions . . . . .	112
6.2	Actual Conversions . . . . .	136
6.3	Potential Conversions . . . . .	136
7.1	Grant Aid Under the Barns and Walls Conservation Scheme 1991 - 1992 (as of May 1991) . . . . .	157

## List of Maps

## After Page

2.1	Pennine Survey Region . . . . .	15
2.2	Designated Areas in the Pennines Region . . . . .	16
2.3	District Planning Authority Survey . . . . .	27
2.4	County Council/ National Park Survey . . . . .	28
6.1	Proposed Residential Conversion at Chollerton in Northumberland . . . . .	115
8.1	Listed Farm Buildings in Tynedale District . . . . .	181

List of Plates		After Page
5.1	Standard Gabled Field Barn in Swaledale (dales) . . . . .	73
5.2	Bastle Incorporated into a Working Farm Building at The Monk, North Pennines. The Arched Doorway is Clearly Visible . . . . .	76
5.3	Lean-to Barn in Wensleydale . . . . .	82
5.4	Adapted Barn in Wensleydale . . . . .	82
5.5	Renovated Barn with Electricity Supply in Wensleydale . . . . .	82
6.1	Former Cow Byre Converted into a Coffee Shop at Allenheads in the North Pennines . . . . .	92
6.2	Barn Converted to Residential Use at East Halton in the Yorkshire Dales . . . . .	95
6.3	Conversion of a Barn into a Cafe at Storiths in the Yorkshire Dales. Car Parking Facilities had to be Created on what was Formerly Grazing Land . . . . .	112
6.4	Proposed Residential Conversion at Chollerton in Northumberland . . . . .	115
6.5	Residential Conversion at Unthank Farm in the North Pennines . . . . .	116
6.6	An Illustration of the Scale of the Conversion at Unthank Farm . . . . .	116
6.7	Conversion to Bed and Breakfast and Self-catering Accommodation at Ryehill Farm in the North Pennines . . . . .	119
6.8	Conversion of a Former Barn to Bunkhouse Accommodation on the Bolton Abbey Estate in the Yorkshire Dales . . . . .	119
6.9	Cow Byre Converted to Hotel Accommodation at Bishop Field Farm Hotel in the North Pennines . . . . .	121
6.10	Former Milking Parlour, Piggery and Stable Converted into a Dining Room, Kitchen, Lounge and Bedrooms at Bishop Field Farm Hotel . . . . .	121
6.11	The Lounge in a Former Cow Byre at Bishop Field Hotel . . . . .	122
6.12	Workshops in Former Stables at Pilsey In the Peak District . . . . .	124
6.13	Farm Shop in the Barn of the Pilsey Stables, with the Ample Car Parking Clearly Visible . . . . .	124
6.14	Matfen Workshops in Northumberland (Cheviot) . . . . .	125
6.15	Workshops in a Former Dairy Farm at the Milkhope Centre in Northumberland (Cheviot) . . . . .	125
7.1	Former Tithe Barn Now Used as a Forestry Workshop at Bolton Abbey in the Yorkshire Dales . . . . .	151
7.2	Bleagate Barn - South Tyne Valley . . . . .	153
7.3	Drebley Cruck Barn - Wharfedale . . . . .	153
8.1	The Barns and Walls Panorama of Swaledale in the Yorkshire Dales . . . . .	186
8.2	'Golding Constable's Flower Garden', Note the Barn in the Near Background . . . . .	186

**Chapter 1**  
**Introduction**



## 1.1 Subject Outline

The conservation and conversion of traditional farm buildings (TFBs) has become an important issue in rural Britain. Such buildings have been the subject of increasing demand for conversion to residential and commercial use. At the same time the increased value being placed on conservation has culminated in efforts to conserve TFBs even without positive end-uses.

The thesis is centred around a resource of remarkable variety and value. TFBs date from a different era. When before the age of mass transport and the world-wide movement of raw materials, building types and design demonstrated marked regional variations. The difficulties of moving high bulk, relatively low value building materials meant that local building materials were used whenever possible. In addition the relative immobility of the population meant that building design and types showed distinct regional differences. Outside influences were slow to penetrate into remote rural areas such as the Pennines. Thus TFBs demonstrate distinctive types, styles and materials. Regional traditions are particularly strong in the case of farm buildings because of the emphasis on functionality with little need to experiment with new ideas and fashions (Brunskill 1978, 1982 and Harvey 1970).

## 1.2 Development of the Subject

As a precursor to further discussion, including the methodological approach in chapter 2, it is necessary to outline how the precise thesis subject was formulated from an initially broad field of study. Such a discussion is important to indicate the philosophy and principles which underlie the research.

The research was stimulated by two inter-related issues: the uplands debate and the crisis in the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). The uplands debate concerns the appropriate policy response to the maintenance of upland communities and the



economy on which they are based. Such areas have come under increasing economic and social pressure in the post-war period. Marginal land and severe climate largely restrict farming activity to livestock rearing. As a result hill farming has become heavily reliant on state subsidy. For this reason upland farms are extremely vulnerable to the types of agricultural reforms which have taken place during the 1980's. Despite reduced employment levels, agriculture is still important to rural economies. Problems in farming have wider implications affecting the whole rural community. This prompted MacEwan and Sinclair to conclude that "the future of the uplands depends very largely on farming ... policies and practices" (1982 p1).

The remoteness of hill communities adds to the problems, there being long standing problems of lack of services, transport and employment. In response to these problems the Countryside Commission listed 3 policy objectives in their report 'What Future for the Uplands?':

"Social - to maintain the population levels in the uplands and reasonable provision of services;

Economic - to provide opportunities for suitable economic development which take account of the special need of the uplands;

Environmental - to safeguard the areas of particular national scenic, recreational and wildlife importance" (1983 p21).

The problems of the CAP are covered in greater detail in chapter 4. However it is essential to understand that the need for reform has resulted in efforts to find alternatives to the market price mechanism in farm support. Such efforts have aimed to reduce surpluses and the associated financial burden imposed on the European Community. Environmental payments and diversification incentives have been the principal mechanisms used in reforming the CAP, both can involve TFBs.

The thesis reflects elements of both these background issues. The study region is an upland area and the conservation and conversion of TFBs is one method of diversifying farming activities.

### 1.3 Background to the Subject (figure 1.1)

Having discussed the issues which stimulated an interest in the research subject the next step is to outline the latter day processes which underlie the thesis subject itself. The initiatives surrounding the reform of the CAP are obviously a fundamental consideration in a study of TFBs. This applies both at the European and national level. The former sets the context for policy making while the latter has determined the scale, nature and degree of implementation of policy initiatives.

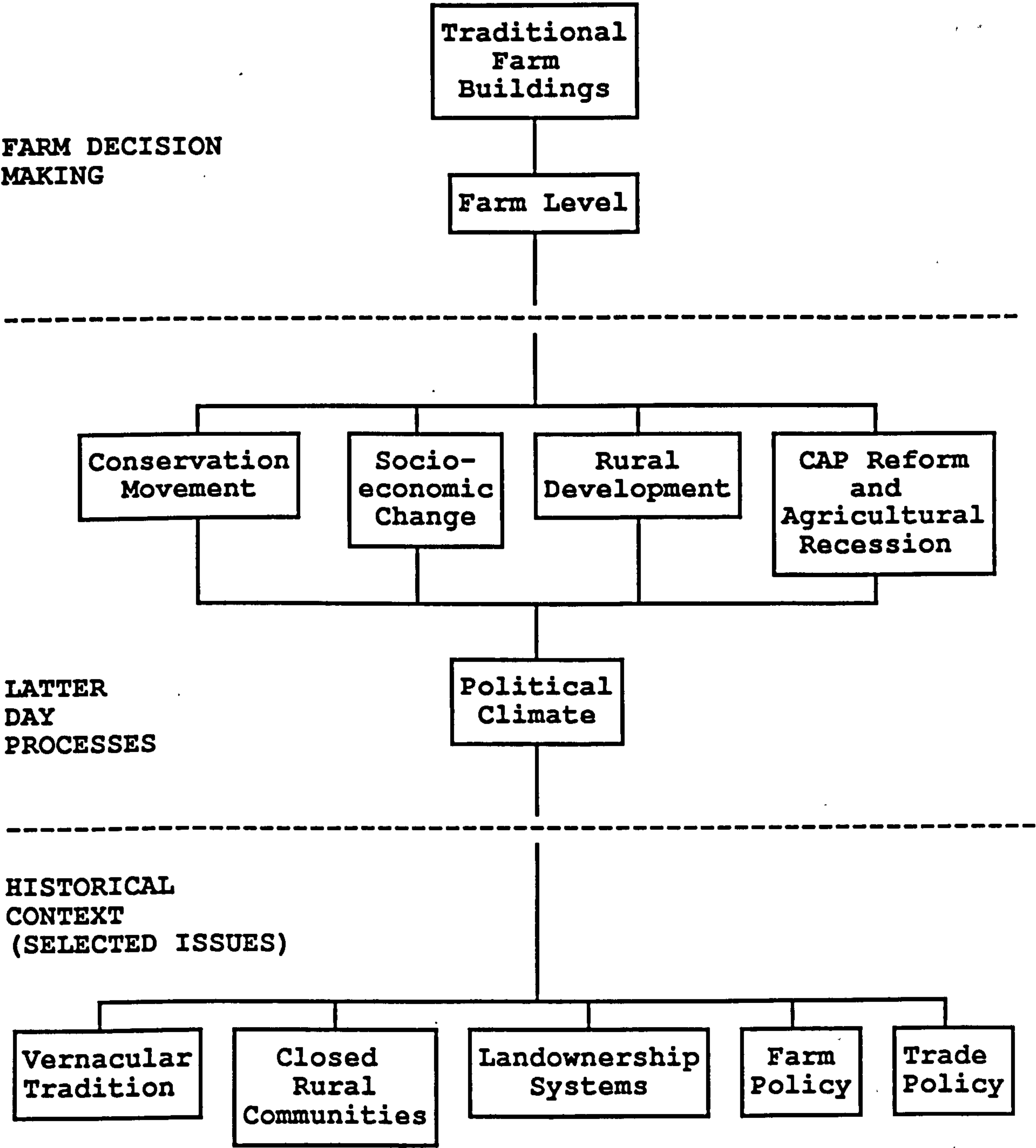
The increased emphasis placed on private enterprise and small business activity has resulted in government efforts to stimulate farm diversification, a significant proportion of which involves conversion of buildings to new uses. Simultaneously government policy directives have aimed to facilitate such conversion. This has been achieved through the work of organisations such as the Agricultural Development and Advisory Service (ADAS) and Rural Development Commission (RDC). In addition, relaxations in planning controls have been aimed at facilitating conversion.

Social changes have also been occurring. Rural in-migration has led to increased pressure for residential conversion. Rural society has become more cosmopolitan providing a further incentive for conversion as the role of farming has been reduced. Increased leisure time and affluence amongst sections of the community have further stimulated conversion.

Many of those who migrate into rural areas hold strongly conservationist views which contrast with the traditional rural emphasis on functionality. The environmental

Figure 1.1

Background to the Subject



movement covers a huge and diverse range of issues but it is the essential concepts that are of relevance to the subject, particularly the desire to conserve past structures and to view modernity as something undesirable. This idea was described by John Betjemen as "antiquarian prejudice" (Pearce 1989 p28). Thus the emphasis on conservation is a further process underlying the thesis, both within rural areas and at the national level. In this context it is important to stress the value of TFBs which HRH The Prince of Wales described as the best of "architecture without architects" (1991 p12).

The major processes outlined have historical origins the principal aspects of which are discussed in chapters 4 and 5 (figure 1.1).

### **1.3.1 The Farm Level**

Background socio-economic and political forces set the context for conservation and conversion but it is at the farm level where the future of TFBs is ultimately determined.

The factors of production and the business orientation of farmers are the immediate determinants of the use of TFBs. In turn these are influenced by wider processes, specifically the post-war intensification of agriculture as outlined by authors such as Newby (1979) and Body (1983). More recently deepening recession has increased interest in the conversion potential of TFBs, although the extent to which this has been translated into positive action is questionable.

## **1.4 Aims and Objectives**

The identification of a clear set of aims and objectives is crucial to the formulation and execution of the research.



The aim of the thesis is to evaluate the conservation and conversion of traditional farm buildings in terms of physical, socio-economic and aesthetic values (the emphasis being placed on direct value). The relative values of these aspects is a significant element of the thesis allowing conclusions and recommendations to be drawn about the merits of the various options.

This evaluation has two aspects: the intrinsic value of TFBs and the use value derived from their conservation and conversion. Only by studying both these aspects is it possible to draw conclusions about the significance of conservation and conversion.

### **1.4.1 Hypotheses**

Topical and methodological knowledge suggests 3 hypotheses relating to evaluation:

The conservation and conversion of TFBs in the Pennines needs to be valued on aesthetic, philosophical and social criteria, as well as by economic factors.

TFBs have both intrinsic and use values which makes their conservation desirable even without a positive use.

The conservation and conversion of TFBs in the Pennines has value at a farm, area, regional and national level.

### **1.4.2 Fundamental Questions**

In order to achieve such an evaluation five fundamental questions were identified at an early stage in the research. These then formed the framework for the thesis:

What has become available for conservation and conversion?

Why have they become available for conservation and conversion?

How can they be conserved and converted?

Why is it important to conserve?

What are the ramifications of conservation and conversion?



### 1.4.3 Underlying Assumptions (Table 1.1)

The research draws on a number of underlying assumptions. Although these largely preclude a rigorously objective approach, they are an inevitable aspect of applied research. Identifying them helps with understanding and evaluating many of the arguments presented on the conservation and conversion of TFBs.

In spite of continuing recession and attempts at restructuring and diversification it is assumed that agriculture is still a primary element in the economic and social structure of rural areas. It is also accepted that the agricultural industry should benefit from state (or EC) support. This applies both to financial and technical assistance and to preferential treatment in the planning system (as outlined in chapter 6). It is assumed that state intervention will increasingly encourage environmental goals rather than stimulate production and that this is a desirable switch in emphasis.

Regarding buildings, TFBs usually have greater heritage value than modern buildings and should be conserved wherever possible. It is accepted that conversion is an important element of the desirable trend towards farm diversification.

Adopting a more perceptual and attitudinal stance it is accepted that conversion will occur when there is the opportunity and motivation. At the same time it is recognised that many farmers value the TFB heritage and the associated landscapes. Similarly social changes are generally judged on the assumption that rural communities should be maintained and supported.

Planning policies and controls are a particularly influential environmental tool, certain basic planning principles are taken for granted even though the validity of some of these principles is central to the changing debate over TFBs. In planning terms agricultural activity is largely classed as permitted development. Simultaneously the planning system has largely protected farmland from urban development. Isolated

Table 1.1 Major Underlying Assumptions

A G R I C U L T U R A L	Agriculture is the primary socio-economic element of rural areas. Thus changes in agriculture will have profound implications for the whole countryside.
C U L	Agriculture should receive material assistance from the state and, or, European Community.
T U R A	State intervention in agriculture is becoming more orientated towards encouraging diversification and environmental goals. This is a desirable development.
L	Schemes and initiatives relating to TFBs should be of a voluntary nature.
P L A	In most cases agriculture is classed as permitted development.
N N I	Farmland should be protected from urban style development
N G	Redundancy is a prerequisite for the granting of planning permission
T F B	TFBs have a greater heritage value than modern farm buildings
S	Diversification and conservation are mainly desirable
P E R	Traditional rural landscapes and societies are to be valued
C E P	Conservation and conversion will occur when the opportunity presents itself
T U A L	Farmers do not always act as rational businessmen. In some cases aspects of heritage, culture and traditional values may override rational economic decision making.

development in the countryside is normally opposed. While redundancy is assumed to be a prerequisite for the granting of planning permission for conversion of TFBs.

It is generally assumed that the various schemes and incentives to reorientate rural economies and communities will be of a voluntary nature, such as in the ESAs outlined in chapter 7.

This statement of underlying assumptions helps to define the context within which the thesis is set. Full evaluation and understanding only becomes possible if the thesis incorporates these philosophical and attitudinal elements. If the study was to be confined to the 'planning report' format based primarily on practical aspects then only superficial evaluation would be possible. This theme is extended into a methodological discussion in chapter 2.

## 1.5 Structure of the Thesis

The structure of the thesis relates to the subject content, hypotheses and fundamental questions outlined in this chapter. It is essentially a logical progression outlining the methodological approach, background issues and practicalities of conservation and conversion, before finishing with a comprehensive evaluation of the conservation and conversion of TFBs. These latter aspects are seen as fundamental to an understanding of conservation and conversion of TFBs.

Chapter two sets out the methodology and begins with an outline of the important terminology, subject matter and geographical boundaries. The chapter builds on this base to discuss the research methodology, how it was derived and the philosophical stand-point from which it emanates. The chapter finishes by discussing the research techniques used and evaluating their application to this type of study.

Chapter three draws on the discussions of content and methodology to identify the existing literature relating to the subject. In itself this provides a useful information source, but more importantly it outlines the practical and theoretical standpoints relating to the thesis. As such the chapter helps to set the context for the thesis and suggests the methodological and topical approaches that are possible.

The aim of chapter four is to outline those aspects of agrarian history which have had an influence on TFBs in relation to the stock of buildings and the socio-economic and political climate surrounding their conservation and conversion. Although the emphasis is on 20th century developments, major events and processes outside of this period are discussed, most notably the enclosure movement. The chapter is important from an historicist aspect, providing a precedent by which to judge some of the modern aspects of conservation and conversion. Such comparisons also add a different complexion to the conclusions and recommendations than if they were simply related to the present day situation.

In discussing the processes of conservation and conversion it is easy to overlook the nature of 'the resource' of TFBs. However this aspect is central to the issues raised in the thesis. Chapter five outlines the main types of TFBs emphasising those which are found in the Pennines. The chapter then goes on to discuss the scale and type of buildings which are available for conservation and conversion and the reasons why they are available. These questions form an essential precursor to later chapters which consider the processes of conservation and conversion. Such processes are heavily influenced by the nature of 'the resource'. Thus the objective of this chapter is not to provide an in depth study of the vernacular architecture of the Pennines. Rather it aims to identify those aspects of the physical resource which are relevant to later discussions of policy and practice.



Chapters six and seven discuss the major options for conservation and conversion. The close interrelationship between these two aspects clouds attempts to draw a distinction. Indeed, conservation is often cited as a motivation for conversion of TFBs. However the growing movement for conservation of TFBs even where no practical usage exists has found material expression in a number of schemes and as such warrants separate discussion in chapter seven. Chapter 7 considers the practicalities of the conservation of TFBs. More significant perhaps is the discussion of the philosophy underlying conservation which is its most distinguishing feature.

Conversion options are considered in chapter 6 which begins by outlining the aims and aspirations of policy makers and farmers. This is followed by a brief discussion of the practical considerations relating to the conversion of TFBs. In the light of this evidence the conversion options are discussed, illustrated with case study material. The final sections of the chapter draw on field evidence to consider the realities of conservation and conversion in the Pennines and assess how the reality matches up to the aims and aspirations of the various parties with an interest in TFBs.

The discussions of conservation and conversion are based on the assumption that TFBs are worthy of retention. In many instances it would be cheaper and easier to demolish a building and erect modern purpose built structures. Thus chapter eight examines the nature and scale of the value placed on TFBs which makes them worthy of retention. Two major themes are developed. Firstly, there is a distinction to be drawn between direct and indirect values. Secondly, the relative importance of intrinsic and use values is assessed. Both these themes are continued into the conclusion.

## **1.6 Applications of the Thesis**

While the thesis has academic purposes it is hoped that it will also have wider applications. By identifying and addressing fundamental questions the thesis goes



beyond the 'planning report' approach. It outlines the *raison d'être* for conservation and conversion and enables recommendations to be made about as to the future policy and practice of conservation and conversion.

Studying a small subject area within the wider spectrum of the 'changing countryside' (chapter 4) enables the thesis to consider the complex processes underlying the changes presently taking place in the British countryside.

It is also hoped that specific conclusions can be drawn about the uplands in general and the Pennine area in particular. Reference to existing studies enables comparisons to be made with the situation on a national basis.

# Chapter Two

## Methodology

## 2.1 Introduction

This discussion of the research methodology considers both the theoretical background to the study and the specific research techniques used.

The chapter starts with a clear definition of the important terminology and boundaries used in the research. It goes on to discuss the development of the research methodology and the specific techniques used before finishing with a review of the methodology, in the context of established Social Science thought and practice.

## 2.2 Terminology

A clear definition of the important terminology is vital for reasons of succinctness and to avoid confusion at a later stage.

### 2.2.1 Conservation

The Oxford dictionary describes 'conserve' as to "keep from decay or change or destruction" (Fowler 1969 p171). Conservation does not preclude change. It can mean the alteration and adaptation of buildings. As Alan Dobby describes:

"conservation can cover all circumstances from absolute retention to demolition, for sometimes partial or complete demolition is necessary for the benefit of an overall project." (1977 p20).

The Collins dictionary describes conservation as "the preservation and protection of the environment" (Sinclair 1987 p299). This is an inferior definition. The concept of preservation is different from conservation, being more akin to 'fossilization'. Michael Middleton describes preservation as an attempt to keep the "total integrity of the structure" (Young 1977 p68). By contrast Middleton says conservation can include "sensible use, re-use, adaption, extension and enhancement of scarce assets." (Young 1977 p68). In some cases even new building can contribute to the conservation of the

environment, by removing dereliction and eyesores. For this thesis the term conservation is taken to mean retention, adaptation and re-use.

### 2.2.2 Conversion

Given that conservation can include re-use, the related issue of conversion needs to be defined, so as to avoid confusion. There are two aspects - physical change and change of use. Conversion may require physical change to buildings, although often the aim is to minimize external alterations in the interests of visual quality. For this reason change of use is the main feature of conversion. In this study it is taken to mean change of use of buildings away from traditional agricultural purposes. For example, value added activities, such as adaptation of a building for farmhouse cheese production constitutes conversion, whereas changing the same building from a cattle shed to a piggery is not. The Longman Dictionary supports this, stating that to convert is to change "from one use or purpose to another" (Procter 1978 p241).

In this thesis the term conversion is used to describe both the process of conversion and subsequent activities which may take place within a TFB.

Most existing literature on the subject makes little attempt to distinguish between conservation and conversion. The difficulty lies in the inter-relationship between the two, with conservation often being cited as a justification for conversion. However later chapters indicate that a distinction does exist.

### 2.2.3 Redundant

The Oxford Dictionary describes redundant as meaning "superfluous, excessive" (Fowler 1969 p690). Pauline Wilkinson adds to this, describing a redundant building as one which "is no longer required or able to fulfil its original purpose." (Wilkinson 1987 p36). The important point is that redundancy does not necessarily mean

dereliction. Nor does it mean a lack of use. Reasons for redundancy include structural, technical and managerial factors.

## **2.2.4 Traditional Building**

The Oxford Dictionary describes traditional as something; "that has prevailed or been accepted from generation to generation" (Fowler 1969 p905). More specifically Pauline Wilkinson describes Traditional Farm Buildings (TFBs) as those which were "constructed by the methods handed down from one generation of craftsmen to the next, using materials from the locality." (Wilkinson 1987 p34). Add to this the idea of regionality, and it is clear that traditional buildings are essentially vernacular architecture (see chapter 5).

## **2.2.5 Farm Building**

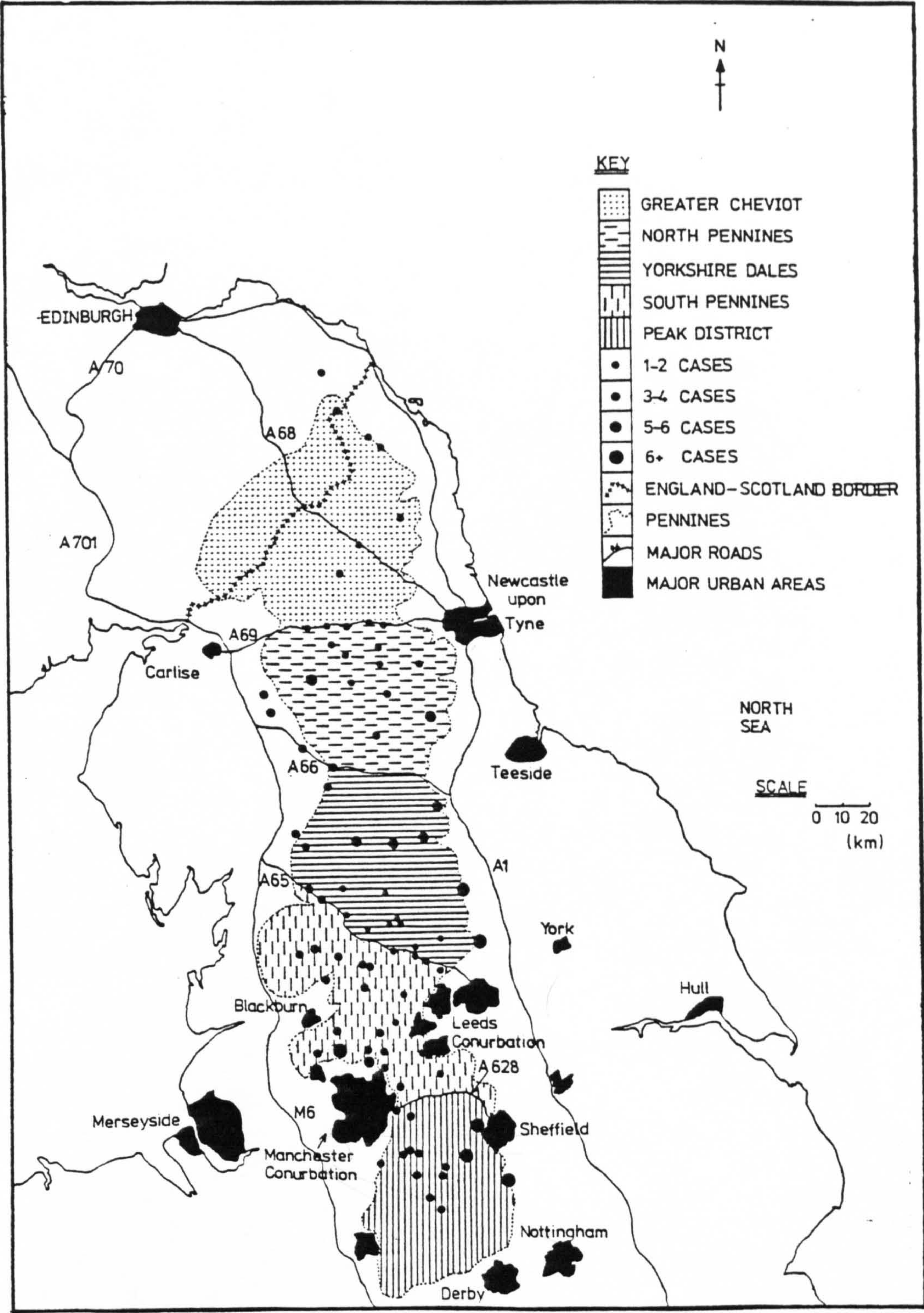
This thesis adopts a different approach from most other established work. Farm buildings are usually taken to exclude farmhouses and living accommodation. As Wilkinson outlines:

"The term 'farm buildings' usually refers to functional or working buildings of the farm as a means of livelihood and excludes the farmhouse and farmworkers cottages." (Wilkinson 1987 p33).

In contrast this work considers all buildings on the farmstead, including residential buildings. The reason is that they often form an integrated unit (such as a longhouse) making any distinction rather spurious, particularly as the buildings themselves are not the sole focus of the thesis, as they are in some literature. Alan Carter and Susanna Wade Martins argued for this approach, feeling that a concentration on certain types of buildings was like; "trying to understand a car engine by looking only at the gearbox" (Carter and Wade Martins 1987 p41).



MAP 2.1 PENNINE SURVEY REGION





It is necessary to identify certain abbreviated terminologies. 'Barn conversion' is commonly used to describe all types of conversion, whether of barns or not. In some cases there is reference to 'the buildings'. This means TFBs.

### **2.2.6 Modern Farm Buildings**

Modern farm buildings are essentially the opposite of traditional, with standardised designs and methods, using mass produced and largely ubiquitous materials.

## **2.3 Boundaries of the Research**

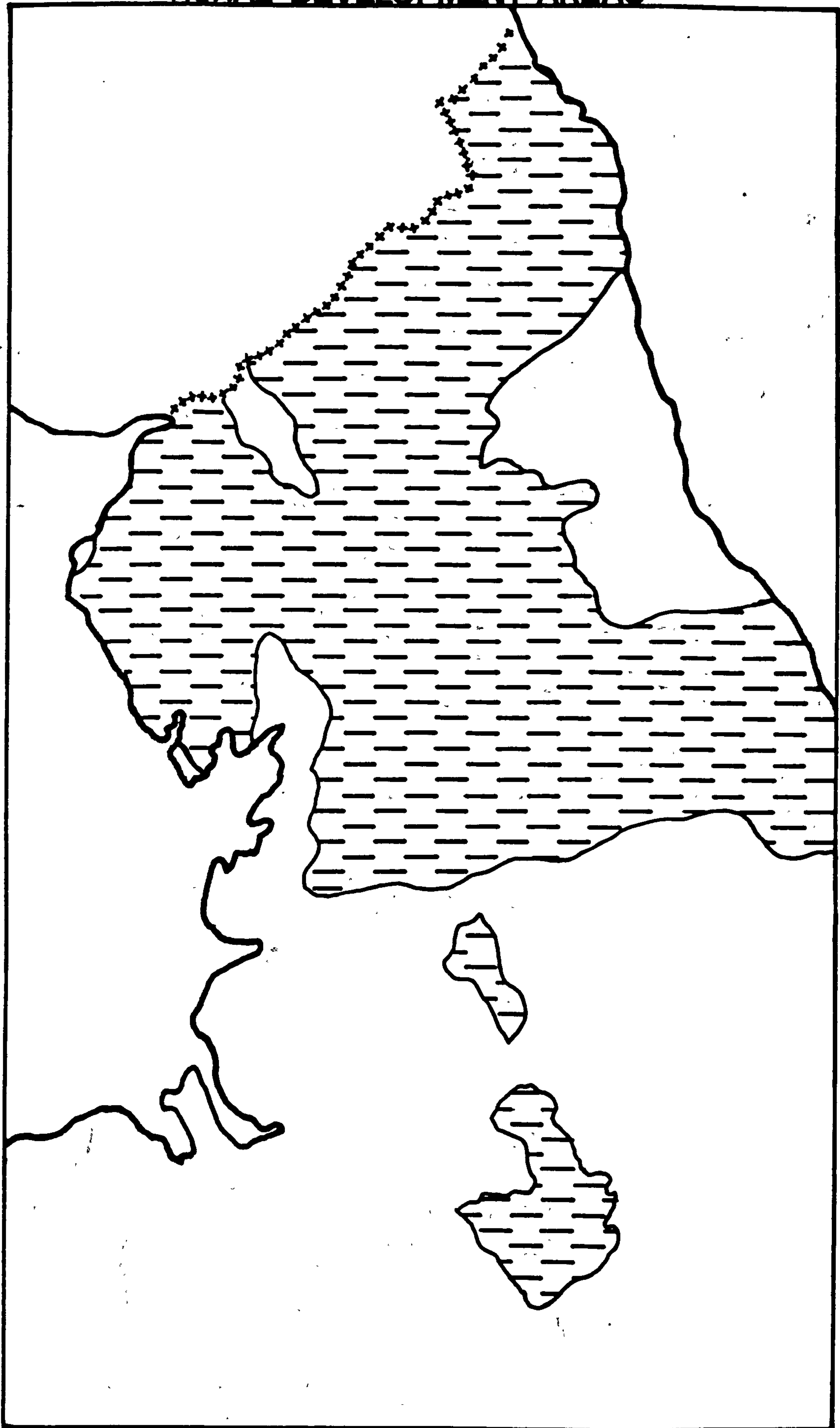
This section defines the geographical, topical and temporal boundaries used in the research.

### **2.3.1 Geographical Boundaries: The Pennines (Maps 2.1, 2.2)**

The Pennine uplands survey region needs to be clearly defined. It is taken as the whole Pennine chain running north from Derbyshire to the Scottish border, with lateral limits at the 200m contour. The inclusion of the Cheviot area (not strictly part of the Pennines), is justified on the grounds that it provides a useful contrast to the heavily populated areas to the south, and is a logical physical continuation of the Pennine chain. Certain other peripheral areas are also included, namely the 'Forests' of Bowland and Rossendale.

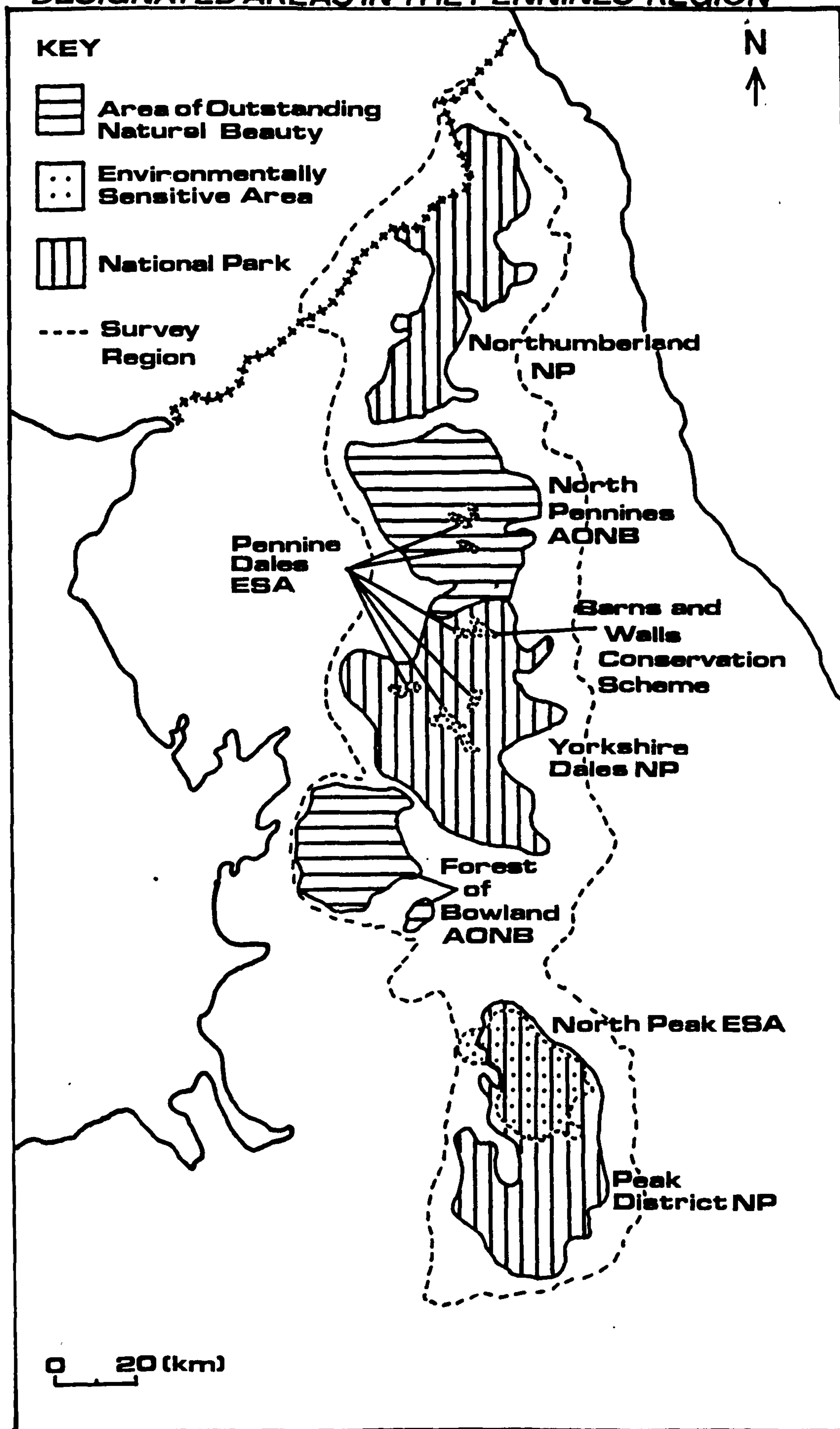
Physically, the survey region forms an almost continuous land mass, much of it over 300m, with a maximum elevation of 893m at Cross Fell in the North Pennines. The climate is harsh, with much of the region receiving more than 1000mm precipitation each year (Ordnance Survey 1986). High precipitation, poor soils and low temperatures mean that livestock farming predominates. Few areas of the Pennines are involved in arable farming.

# RURAL DEVELOPMENT AREAS



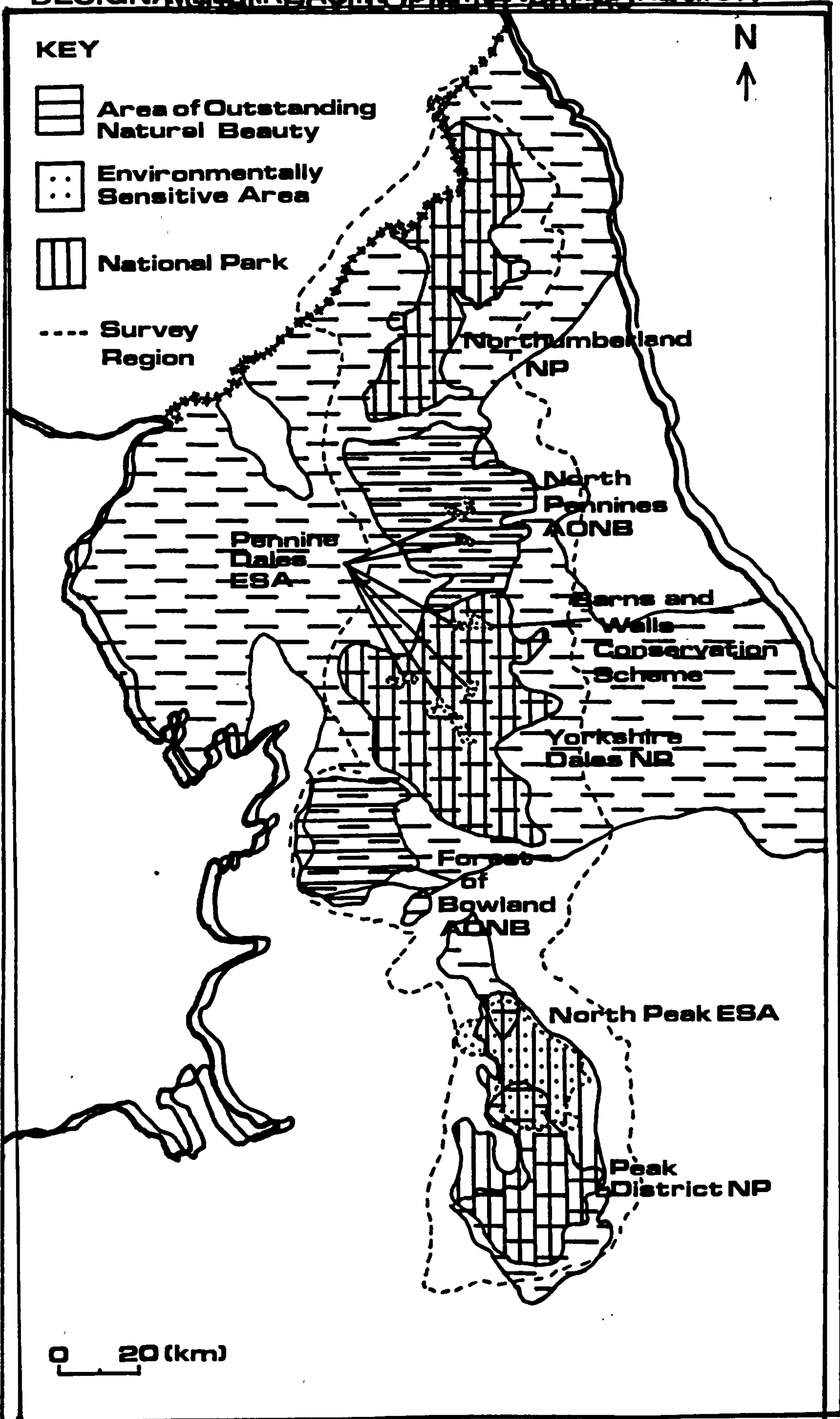
**MAP 2.2**

**DESIGNATED AREAS IN THE PENNINES REGION**



✱ ALL THE SURVEY REGION = 'LESS FAVOURED AREA'  
 ✱ 90% OF THE SURVEY REGION IS A 'RURAL DEVELOPMENT AREA'

**MAP 2.2**  
**DESIGNATED AREAS IN THE PENNINES REGION**



\* ALL THE SURVEY REGION = 'LESS FAVOURED AREA'

\* 90% OF THE SURVEY REGION IS A 'RURAL DEVELOPMENT AREA'



The region is sparsely populated with most areas having a density of less than one person per hectare. There is some regional variation, with the southern areas having higher population densities. The areas around the Leeds and Manchester conurbations have densities as high as 20 persons per hectare (Ordnance Survey 1986).

The Pennines are crossed by a series of east-west transport links which follow natural topographic features. These form the basis for the sub-division of the survey region into 5 homogeneous areas, as outlined below (Map 2.1).

### 2.3.2 Cheviot (2776 km<sup>2</sup>) (Fig 2.1)

The 'Cheviot' is taken as all the upland area from the Scottish border southwards to the 'Tyne Gap' (A69). This is the remotest survey area, with population densities consistently below one person per hectare. The area includes commercial forestry based on Kielder, water supply also at Kielder and the military ranges at Otterburn. The relatively few farms tend to consist of compact farmsteads and very large land holdings (fig. 2.2) (Northumberland National Park Committee 1984, Newton 1972).

Tourism is still on a small scale, The essence of the area is its undeveloped nature, a point stressed by the Development Officer to the Northumbria Tourist Board (1).

The area includes both the Northumberland National Park and Border Forest Park. As with virtually all the Pennines the area is designated as a Less Favoured Area (LFA) for agriculture.

### 2.3.3 North Pennines (2682 km<sup>2</sup>) (Fig 2.1)

The North Pennines is the area between the 'Tyne Gap' and the 'Stainmore Gap' (A66). Although less remote than the 'Cheviots' the area includes one of the highest



Figure 2.1

SIZE OF AREAS

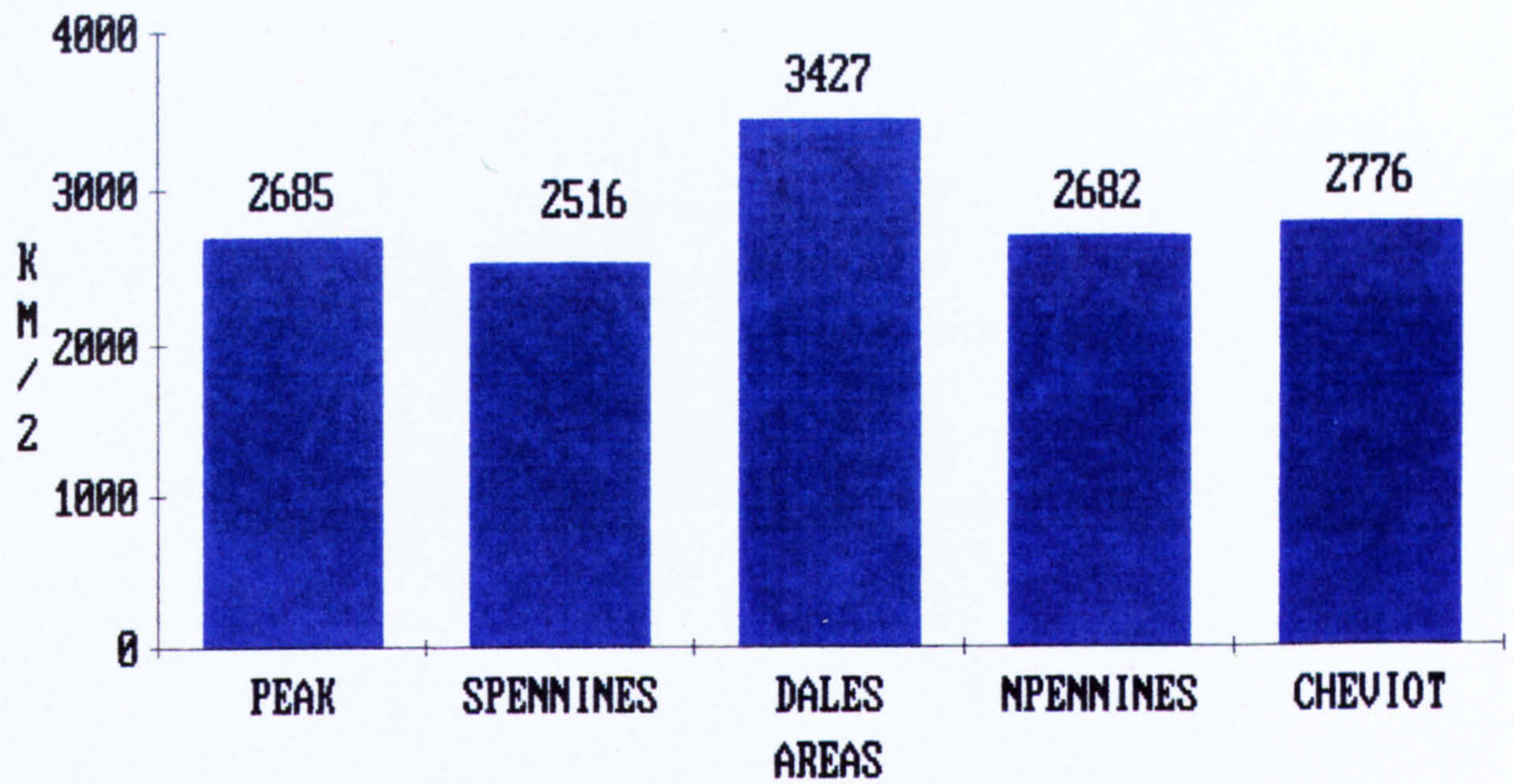
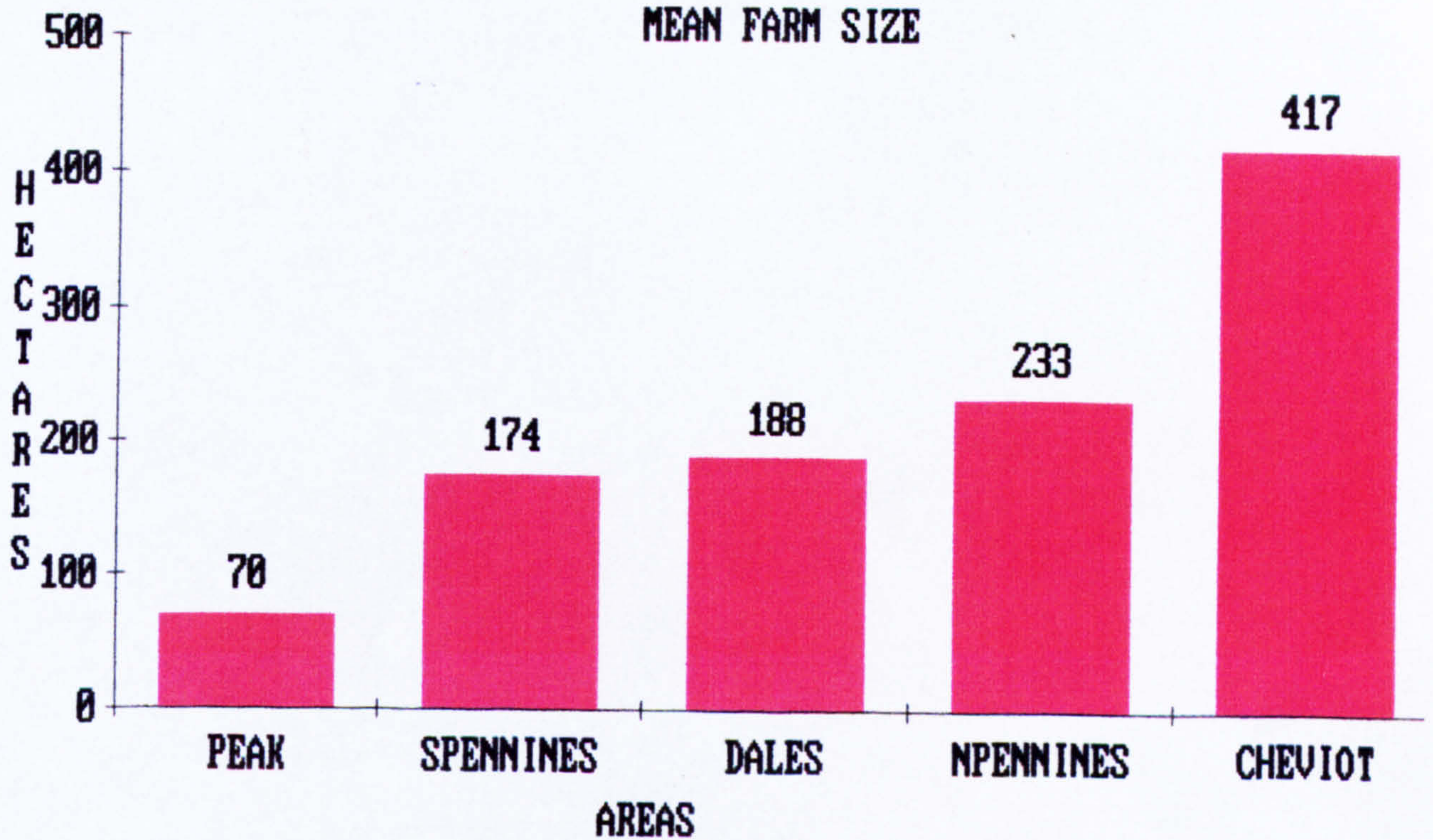


FIGURE 2.2

MEAN FARM SIZE





landmasses in England, the Cross Fell massif. The Northumberland and Durham Dales form a more amenable environment for habitation and agriculture than the Cheviot area. In many parts of the area settlement patterns and sizes have been influenced by lead mining during the 18th and 19th centuries, an example being Allenheads described in chapter 6. As with the Cheviot this is a tourism growth area.

The area includes the North Pennines 'Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty' (AONB). In addition, Teesdale and Weardale form part of the Pennine Dales Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA). The whole area is an LFA.

#### **2.3.4 Yorkshire Dales (3427 km<sup>2</sup>) (Fig 2.1)**

The 'Dales' is the area between the Stainmore Gap (A66) and the 'Craven lowlands' (A65). The geology of the area has had a major influence on human activity, with the rich legacy of mining, particularly for lead. The limestone areas of the south offer rich pasture. Farming is similar to other areas of the Pennines, one difference being the Field Barn systems (chapter 5).

Unlike the Cheviots and North Pennines the Dales have a well established tourist industry, with many famous attractions, such as Hardraw Force waterfall. Designations include the Yorkshire Dales National Park, the Pennine Dales ESA and an LFA. More specifically there is the 'Barns and Walls Conservation Scheme' (BWCS) (see chapter 7).

#### **2.3.5 South Pennines (2516 km<sup>2</sup>) (Fig 2.1)**

The South Pennines lie between the 'Craven Lowlands' and the A628 in the Longdendale Valley, including the outlying areas of the 'Forests' of Bowland and Rossendale. The close proximity of the Manchester and Leeds conurbations has exerted a strong influence on the area. Urban areas encroach onto the hills, effectively

restricting agriculture to the poorer moorland fringe. Many of the valleys are dominated by non-farm uses, such as reservoirs. Tourism tends to be on a fairly modest scale. There are fewer 'designations' than the other areas, although the North Peak ESA and Peak District National Park impinge on the southern part of the area, and the Forest of Bowland is designated as an AONB.

### 2.3.6 Peak District (2365 km<sup>2</sup>) (Fig 2.1)

The Peak District is defined as the area south from the A628 to the end of the Pennine chain in mid-Derbyshire and Staffordshire. Physically it can be divided between the Millstone Grit of the north and the limestone areas of the south. Farming in the valleys of the northern area is complemented by grouse shooting on the heather moorlands. Further south, even the upland plateau of the limestone is under pasture, the climate and soils being more amenable. Even so, the land is predominantly grades 4 and 5 (under MAFF classifications). As with all areas of the Pennines arable farming is rare, forming only 0.5% of the total farmland in the Peak District National Park (Peak Park Joint Planning Board 1989).

A characteristic of the Peak District is the close proximity of large urban areas. For example, Sheffield is only 20 minutes drive from the Park. Correspondingly, day visitor pressure is high. For example, of 18.5 million visits in the 1986/87 season only 2 million were staying visitors. The influence of the location is illustrated by the fact that 65% of the day visitors were from surrounding conurbations (Peak Park Joint Planning Board 1989).

The ease of commuting from the area has resulted in considerable in-migration, leading to pressure on the local housing stock, a point discussed in later chapters. Most of the survey area is in the National Park. To the north there is the Dark Peak ESA, with the whole area being an LFA. In addition the Peak Park has initiated some



schemes, such as the 'Integrated Rural Development Projects' at Longnor and Monyash.

### **2.3.7 Tynedale District (Map 2.3)**

In addition to the 5 areas described, Tynedale District was used as a detailed case study. At 2220 km<sup>2</sup> Tynedale is the largest district in England and Wales, and has a population of around 56 000 (est. based on 1981 census), giving a density of 25 persons/km<sup>2</sup>. Most of the population is concentrated in the Tyne Valley, in towns such as Hexham, while the upland areas to the north and south are sparsely populated (Tynedale 1990).

Farming is predominantly livestock although arable farming is found in the lower areas of the Tyne Valley. Tourism is still on a limited scale accounting for only 12% of the workforce (PA Consultants 1987). The north of the district lies in the Northumberland National Park, while to the south there is the North Pennines AONB. Most of the district is in the Northumberland Rural Development Area (RDA), and is an LFA.

The variety of Tynedale District makes it a representative area for case study, demonstrating many of the features seen in other areas of the Pennines.

## **2.4 Topical Boundaries**

The topical boundaries can be defined in terms of resource, process and effect. The TFBs constitute the resource (chapters 4,5). The processes are conservation and conversion (chapters 6,7), while effects concern the values of TFBs (chapters 8,9).



## 2.5 Temporal Boundaries

The issue addressed by the thesis is very much a contemporary one. However, an historical perspective is necessary to set contemporary events in their true context. For example in chapter 4 there is a comparison between the 1980's agricultural recession and that of the 1930's. An historical perspective also helps in understanding contemporary structures, for example the Field Barn systems of Dales, outlined in chapter 5.

Where appropriate the thesis addresses likely future developments and the goals of the main actors involved with conservation and conversion, evidence being based on such sources as interviews and questionnaires. For instance question 12 in the farmers' survey (Appendix B) asked: "Do you envisage non-farm ventures being an important part of the farm business in the future?".

## 2.6 Development of a Research Framework

A research framework was developed for the study. This utilised a number of existing methodological approaches and research techniques, the precise format being largely dictated by the type and physical extent of the study.

### 2.6.1 Existing Methodologies

The standard work on the subject is Pauline Wilkinson's 'Alternative Uses for Redundant Farm Buildings' (1987). Wilkinson's methodology was restricted to a discussion of research techniques. Hypotheses are defined at the start of the work, so in this sense a deductive style was adopted. However, most of the survey was given over to collecting data, assimilating it, drawing conclusions and making recommendations, more of an inductive approach. Methods used included case studies, questionnaires, interviews and secondary data. Wilkinson made an attempt at identifying the contemporary system within which the issue is located, both external

and internal processes being considered. By considering 'the whole', a systems type approach was adopted. However, many fundamental processes were not addressed. For example, planning policy was considered, but not the underlying issues, such as the socio-political orientation of the planning system, and its implications for conservation and conversion.

'Superb Conversions' (Watkins and Winter 1988) adopted a similar approach, with secondary analysis, the collection of empirical data and the formulation of conclusions and recommendations. Sometimes an in-depth approach was adopted, particularly in relation to attitudes towards conversion and the internal and external processes relating to the subject.

Gillian Darley's 'A Future for Farm Buildings' (1988) adopted a rather different approach using little primary data, but relying on secondary sources and policy analysis. In addition, Darley concentrated on the nature of the resource of TFBs. Such an approach avoids some of the important aesthetic and attitudinal factors relating to conservation and conversion.

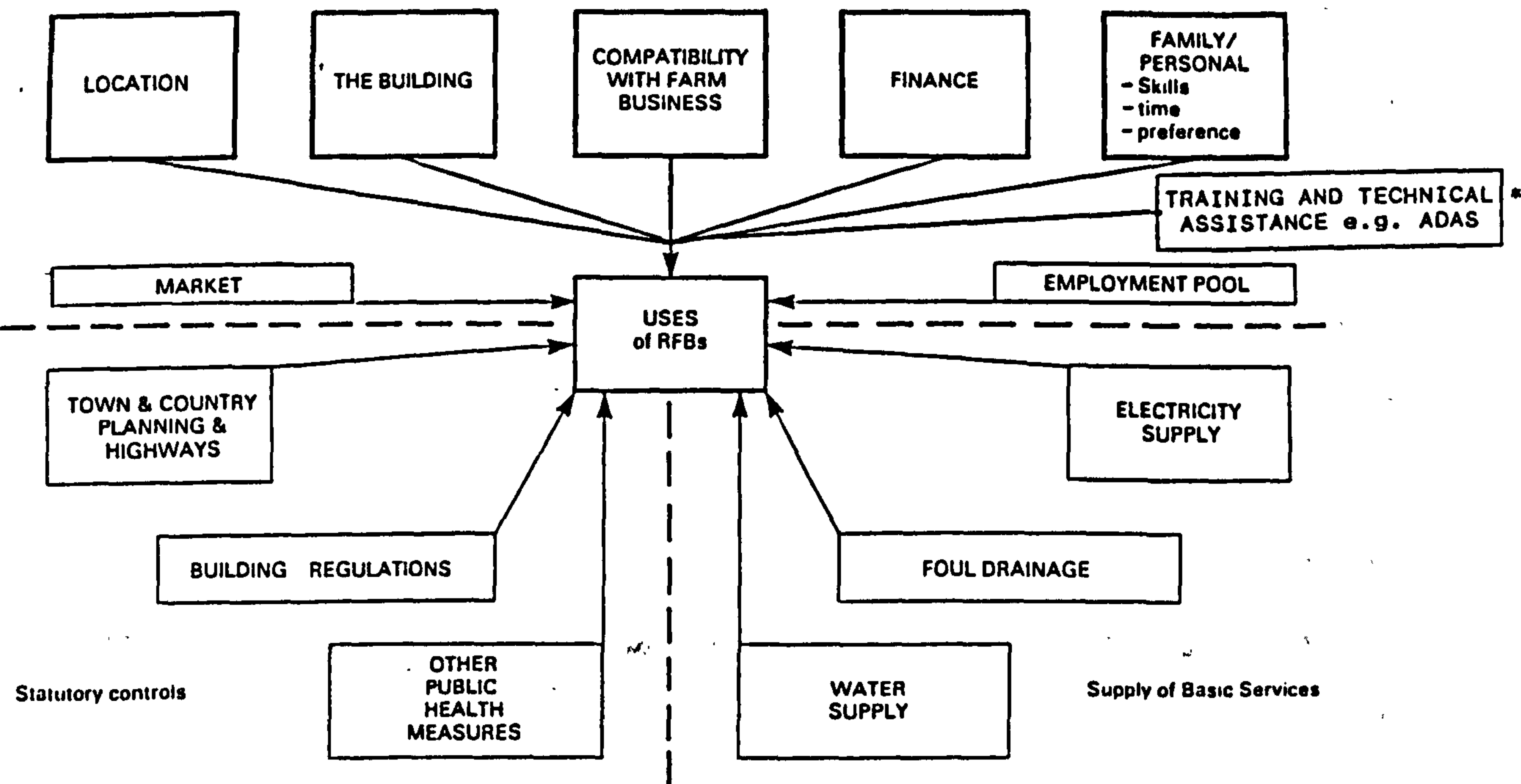
## **2.6.2 Framework**

In the light of these existing studies a research framework was formulated entailing: subject structure, philosophical base and methodology. This strategy has formed the framework for the research carried out.

### **2.6.2.1 Subject Structure**

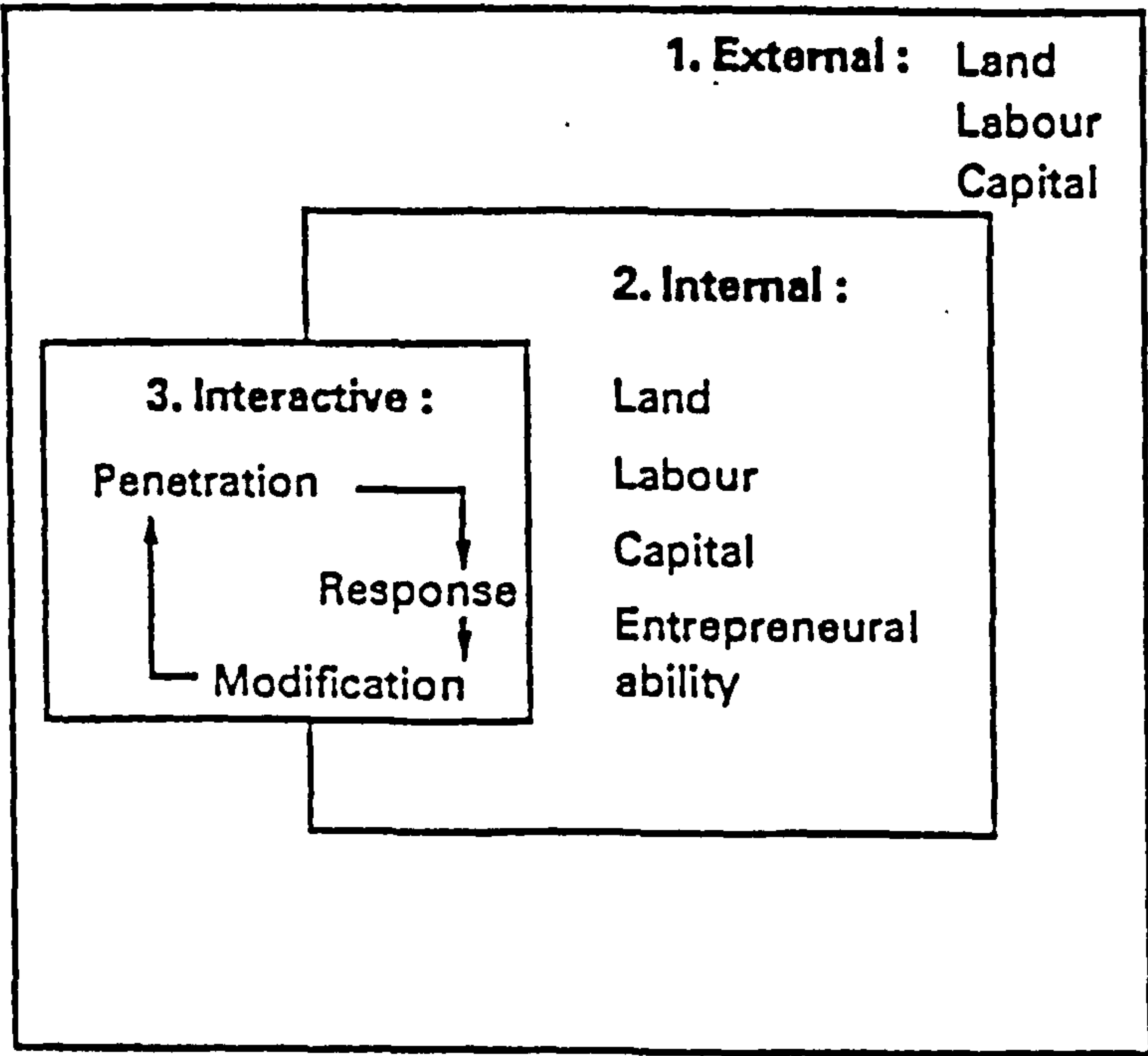
As a precursor to methodology it is necessary to consider the structure of the subject. Indeed this largely dictates the methods used.

**Figure 2.3 Decision Making in Conservation and Conversion: The Farm Level**



Source: Wilkinson 1987 p13 N.B. asterisk marks authors addition

**Figure 2.4 Internal and External Factors Affecting Decision Making in Conservation and Conversion.**



Source: Evans and Ilbery 1989 p260



The subject could be viewed as an investigation of process and pattern. The pattern is the resource of TFBs and how they have been used, while the processes are conservation and conversion.

Examining the processes surrounding the subject allows for an understanding of contemporary and future situations. At the farm level decision making is based on a range of economic, regulatory and technical considerations (Fig 2.3)(chapter 6). Such considerations occur 'internally' (on the farm) and 'externally' (off farm), as Evans and Ilbery (1989) outlined (Fig 2.4). However, a full understanding can only be achieved by considering the underlying processes. These are the 'formal' processes relating public and private sector policy and 'informal' processes which result from the traditions and perceptions of individuals and societies (Fig 2.5).

These classifications of the subject give a guide to the important research topics relating to: the resource of TFBs; their conservation and conversion and the value of TFBs. The next step is to outline the philosophical and methodological approaches used in the research.

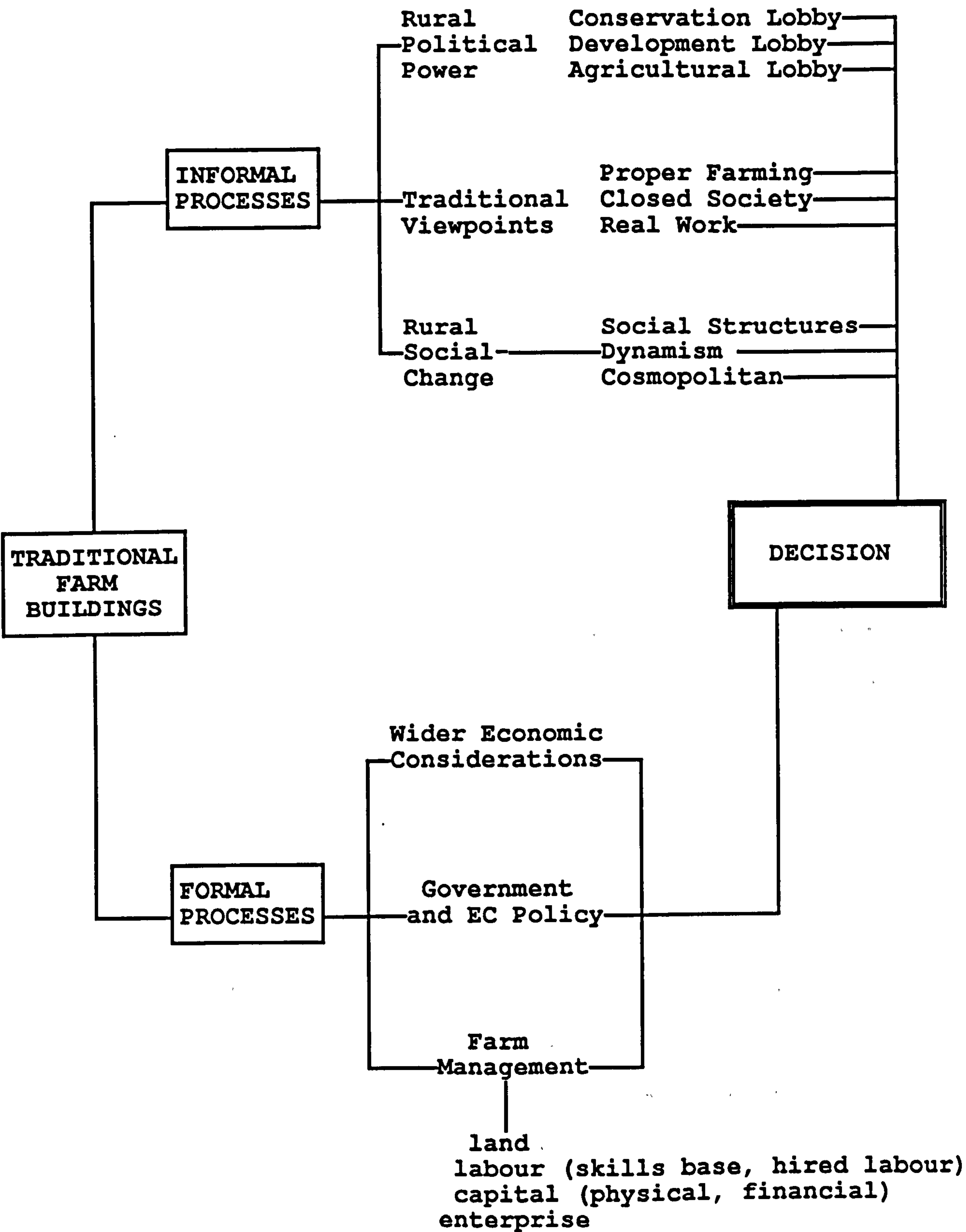
#### 2.6.2.2 Philosophical Base

"Philosophy provides the steering mechanism, methodology provides the power to move us closer to our destination. Without methodology we will lie becalmed, without philosophy we may circle aimlessly without direction." (Harvey 1969 p482).

This quote from David Harvey underlines the importance of philosophical beliefs which are a pre-requisite to a consideration of methodology.

The importance of personal and societal values in the subject, mean that methodology cannot stand in isolation. In other words, the positivist approach is largely rejected in favour of a method, based on aesthetic, societal and personal beliefs. There is a rejection of the concentration on quantifiable aspects adopted in many other

Figure 2.5 Processes Behind Decision Making in the Conservation and Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings.





publications on the subject. If anything, aesthetic and non-quantifiable aspects are afforded a greater significance in this study.

In considering policy making there is a need to address the motivations that lie behind policy. To this end a structuralist methodology is adopted. To a large extent policy making reflects the prevailing attitudes of large sections of society. For example the increase in environmental policies at the government level are an inescapable reaction to trends in public opinion. Many policies are open to varied interpretation, providing further reason for assessing background values and beliefs. Planning appeals provide frequent examples of policy statements coming under close scrutiny.

The development of the subject area represents the authors predilection for a clear, practical based, focus to the thesis. Once established then it is possible to work 'forwards' and 'backwards'. This avoids a 'black box' approach which is seen as inappropriate, as it would be too restrictive and would avoid many important issues. It also provides a reference point for the consideration of the more philosophical aspects of the subject, which might otherwise lack a clear purpose and direction. By way of example the consideration of the aesthetic value of landscape is given a focus by TFBs.

Looking at specific subject areas, the very real difficulties being faced by the hill farmers, provided a major stimulus for the study. This concern was given further credence by the diverse values of such farming systems including social, political and aesthetic factors. In addition, the implications of a collapse of the industry would go far beyond the purely economic, affecting hill landscapes, communities and political structures. These ideas constitute the motivation behind the two major issues of the CAP crisis and uplands debate.

More specifically any consideration of TFBs is inevitably influenced by the prevailing views of society. In this case the rejection of modernism and the increasing emphasis on conserving old structures has led to a greater value being placed on TFBs. This is exemplified by the formation of the Historic Farm Buildings Group (HFBG) in 1985, with its interest in the; "past present and future of historic farm buildings" (Wade Martins 1991). Despite the aim of avoiding undeclared assumptions, elements of what Betjeman called 'antiquarian prejudice' have inevitably influenced the research.

Harvey stressed the need to develop a clear philosophy in conjuncture with methodology. In this thesis the problem has not been one of development, the philosophical beliefs being largely pre-determined or formulated during the early stages of research. The difficulty has been in the identification of such beliefs, given the subconscious nature of many of the philosophical aspects of the thesis.

Summarized briefly, the philosophical approach to the subject has entailed the identification of a topical issue of personal concern to the author. The concentration on TFBs was a response to the need to restrict the survey to a manageable size. The expansion of the subject to consider aesthetic and attitudinal aspects reflected the belief that these factors were as, if not more, important than functional and economic considerations.

#### **2.6.2.3 Methodological Approaches**

The approach adopted is essentially threefold - structuralist, historicist and comparative. The structuralist approach was adapted to study underlying processes relating to TFBs. The 'surface' issues surrounding TFBs can only be understood by considering the 'deeper' issues presently at work in the countryside, a selection of

Table 2.1 The 'Levels' of Study Relating to TFBs

Surface Issues	Deeper Issues
agricultural, rural and planning policy	the political climate on a national and EC level
change in farming methods	ethics of intensive production
conservation policies	societal shift to conservation
redundancy as an operational result	redundancy as part of the agri-business mentality
business conversions	the enterprise culture
practicalities of conversion e.g. land, labour, capital	perceptual standpoint and rural conservatism
economic value of TFBs	aesthetic and spiritual value
direct impact of conservation and conversion	wider ramifications e.g. social and landscape changes



which are shown in table 2.1. Figure 2.6 provides an example of such relationships as they relate to issues of value.

Where appropriate an historicist approach is adopted. Section 4.6 is an example. This discusses the parallels between the agricultural recessions of 1930's and 1980's. Historicism is applied in a number of ways. It provides a benchmark for judging contemporary issues, such as government hill farm policies. It also provides examples, the importance of part-time hill farming in the past being a case in point (see chapter 4). Another application is in providing explanation. For example the field barn system (Chapter 5) is a surviving relic of a system of farming which has largely ceased. In summary, the main application of the historicist approach in this thesis is its use as part of a comparative approach.

The comparative approach is the third major methodological element of the thesis, the main application being through case studies and regionality. As section 2.3 details, the survey is divided up into a hierarchy of areas and case studies, with comparison being possible between the different areas. Such comparisons generate conclusions and help in explanation as well as providing a basis for recommendations. For example, comparing the resource of TFBs between areas helps in providing an explanation of varying views and practices on conservation and conversion.

Figure 2.7 summarizes the philosophical and methodological framework to the study. A clear definition of the research subject and its aims has allowed the development of a suitable hybrid methodology, rather than imposing a single methodology on the subject, with all the limitations that would entail.

## 2.7 Research Techniques

The application of the methodology, has necessitated the use of a range of research techniques. This combined approach avoided the biases and inaccuracies, which are

Figure 2.6 Example of the 'Levels of Research': The Conservation of Traditional Farm Buildings

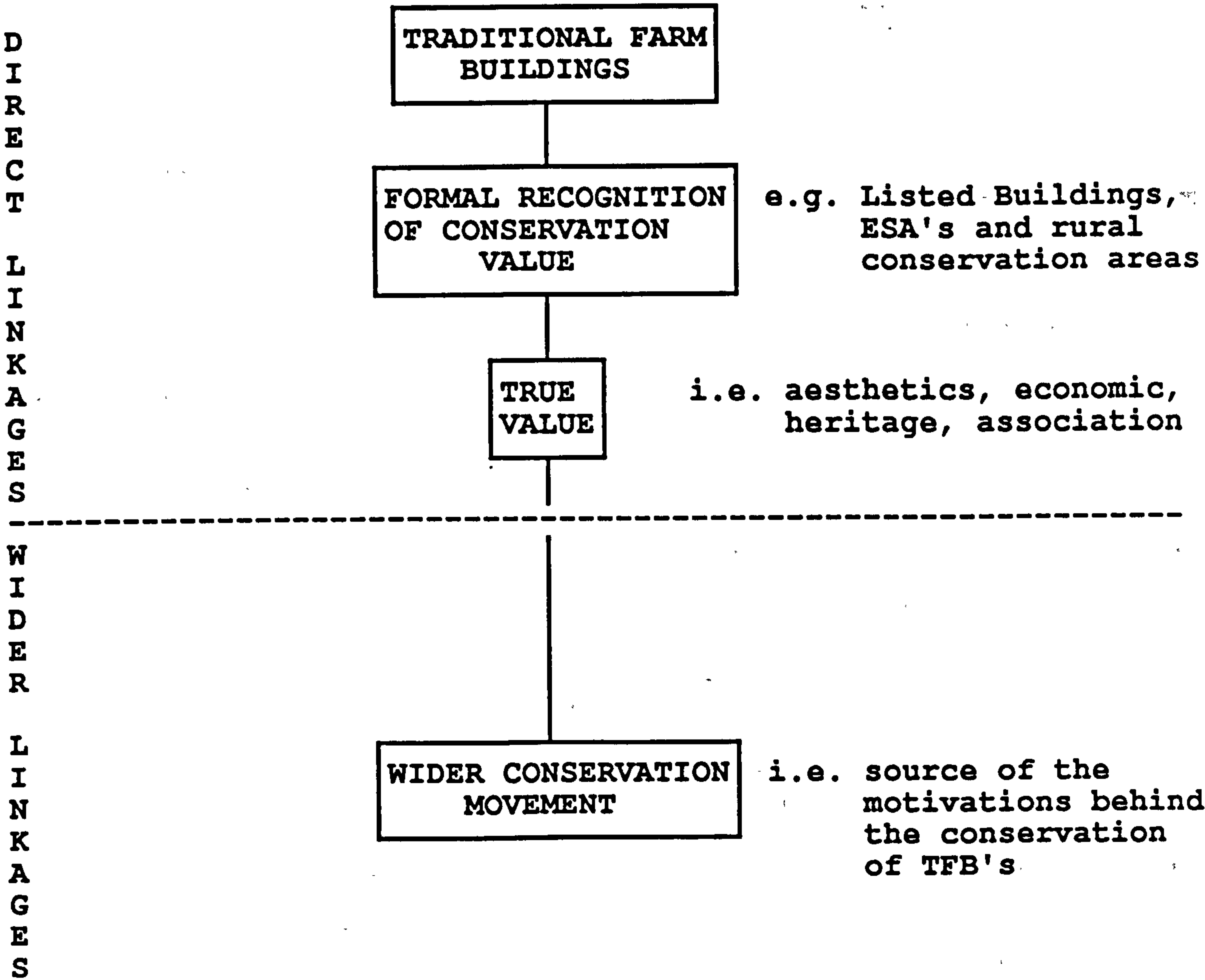
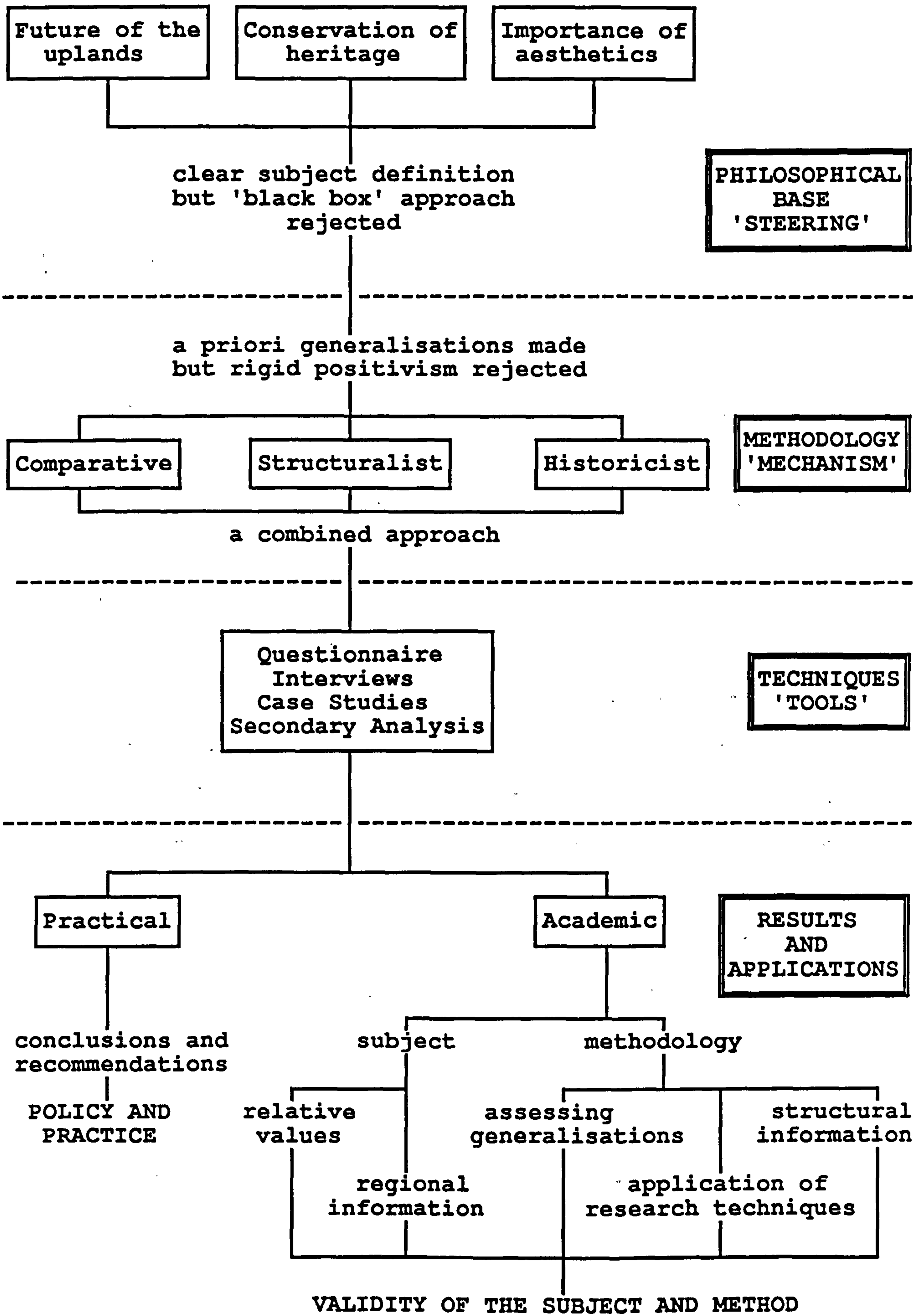




Figure 2.7

Research Framework



likely when only one technique is applied. The combined use of questionnaires and in-depth interviews allowed more detailed examination of issues raised in the questionnaires.

### 2.7.1 Farmer Questionnaire

The main aspect of the practical research was a questionnaire survey of farmers, full details of which can be found in appendices A and B.

Pilot surveys were conducted in Dartmoor and the North Yorkshire Moors (Appendix B), both of which have similar physical and socio-economic characteristics to the Pennines. Following this a postal questionnaire was conducted of a sample of 300 Pennine farmers, generating a usable response of 37%. At this point it is important to describe the aims and objectives behind the survey.

A postal questionnaire was chosen as the best method for overcoming the logistical problems of surveying a large number of samples spread over an extensive and remote hill area. The main drawback in this survey was the difficulty in obtaining detailed responses to open-ended and attitudinal questions. In-depth questions need clarification which can only be provided if the surveyor has direct contact with the respondent. Oppenheim summarized this problem of simplicity: "the questionnaire has to be much simpler and that no additional explanations can be given and no probes requested." (Oppenheim 1968 p33). An example from the survey would be question 12, which although specific, was designed to encourage extended responses: "Do you envisage non-farm ventures being an important part of the farm business in the future?" (Appendix B). Although some respondents elaborated most gave simple yes/no answers.

**KEY**

1 DERWICK UPON TWEEDE B.C.  
 2 ALNWICK B.C.  
 3 TYNDALE B.C.  
 4 CARLISE  
 5 EDEN B.C.  
 6 WEAR VALLEY B.C.  
 7 TESSDALE B.C.  
 8 SOUTH LAKELAND B.C.  
 9 RICHMONDSHIRE B.C.  
 10 LANCASTER  
 11 CRAVEN B.C.  
 12 HARROGATE B.C.  
 13 NIBBLE VALLEY B.C.  
 14 PENDELE B.C.  
 15 BRADFORD  
 16 LEEDS  
 17 BURMLEY B.C.  
 18 CALDERDALE M.B.C.  
 19 ROSSDALE B.C.  
 20 KIRKLEES M.B.C.  
 21 ROCHDALE M.B.C.  
 22 OLDHAM M.B.C.  
 23 BARNESLEY M.B.C.  
 24 HIGH PEAK B.C.  
 25 SHEFFIELD  
 26 DERBYSHIRE DALES B.C.  
 27 NE DERBYSHIRE B.C.  
 28 STAFFORDSHIRE MOORS B.C.  
 29 AMBER VALLEY B.C.

REPLY  
 NO REPLY



The response rate of 37% is a workable return, considering that there was no targeting of farms with a specific interest in the subject. Despite its drawbacks the mail questionnaire was an invaluable tool. As De Vaus described:

"postal questionnaires often are the most practical way of collecting large samples and thus of minimizing sampling error and enabling meaningful analysis." (1986 p66).

### **2.7.2 Local Planning Authority (LPA) Questionnaire (Maps 2.3, 2.4)**

A separate survey of local planning authorities (LPA's) was also undertaken using similar postal questionnaire techniques, thus making the results comparable. The LPA survey covered all District, County and National Park planning authorities, wholly or substantially within the Pennine region (Appendix C).

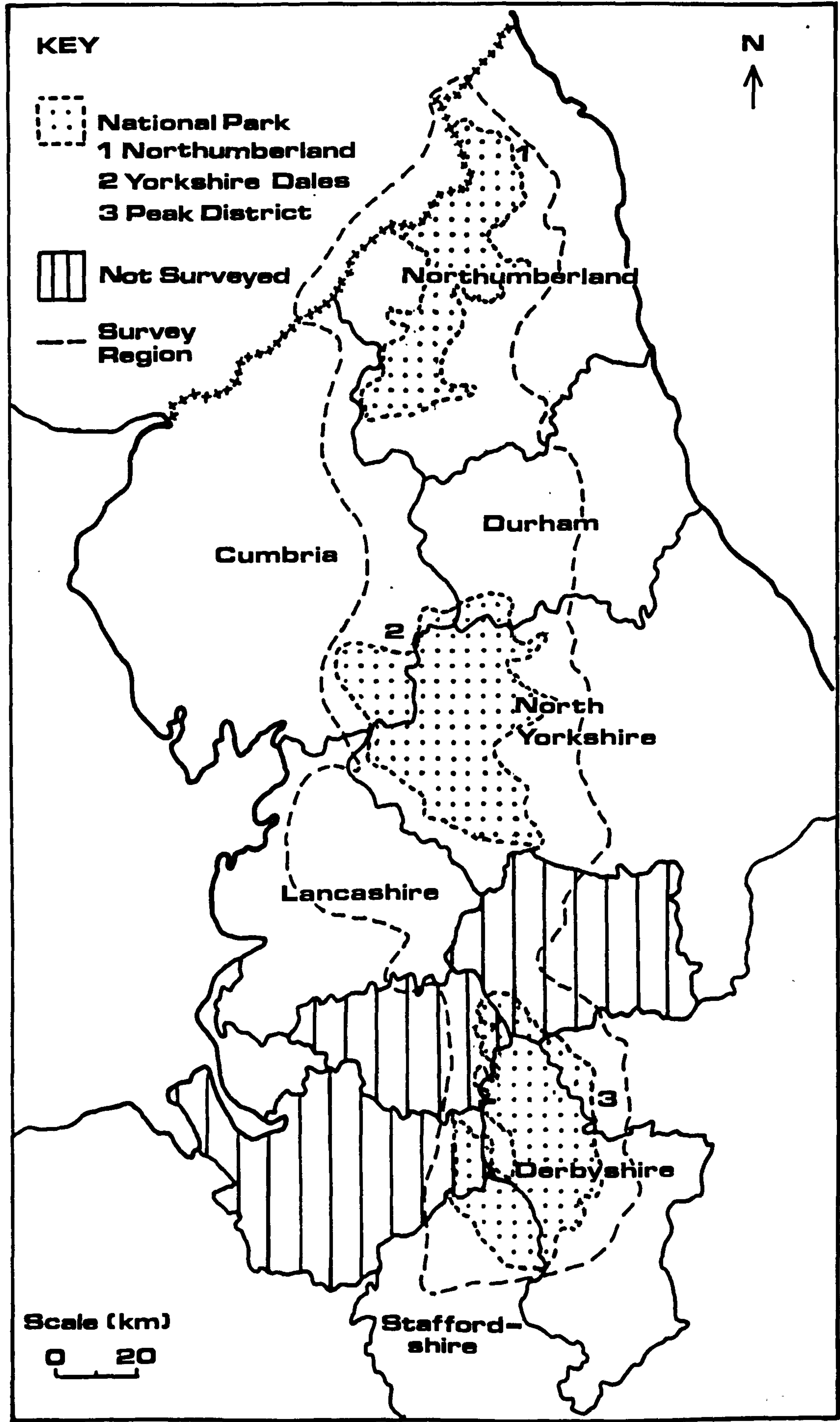
The main problem encountered in the LPA survey was a slow response rate, such that many returns did not achieve the 1 month time limit. However, only 1 return was eventually rejected.

A second problem concerned the differing remits of District, County and National Park authorities. The aim was to keep the questionnaires as similar as possible so as to permit comparative analysis. This proved difficult to reconcile with the differing roles of the local authorities. Put simply County Councils have few 'development control' powers, while some National Park authorities combine the strategic roles of County Councils with the development control functions of the Districts. By way of example, question 5 on all the surveys asked:

"How have recent changes in government policy aimed at encouraging farm diversification (e.g. 'Farm Diversification Scheme' (FDS) and Department of the Environment circular 16/87) affected the councils attitude towards conversions of farm buildings?"



**MAP 2.4**  
**COUNTY COUNCIL / NATIONAL PARK SURVEY**



Lack of Development Control responsibilities made this question difficult for County Councils to answer from first hand experience (2). As Cumbria County Council commented "the answers above are based on discussions with the district councils and contacts with other rural agencies as well as the farming community."

Just as with the farmers survey, it proved difficult to get in-depth responses to attitudinal questions. For example, question 10 on the County Council survey asked:

"If major changes to the external appearance of a traditional agricultural building were proposed for a development to take place, would the County Council normally oppose development, even if the alternative was dereliction?"  
(Appendix C)

Typical responses included "In most cases, yes." (Durham County Council) and "Would depend on the circumstances" (Cumbria County Council). Both these responses are rather general and non-committal. Despite careful wording of questions, and refinement based on pilot studies the problems of open-ended and attitudinal questions could only be overcome by combining postal questionnaires with face to face interviews.

### 2.7.3 Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were used both as a technique in their own right and in support of postal surveys. Interviews were conducted with a range of practitioners and policy makers, namely: farmers, local government officials and representatives of various organisations active in the field (Appendix D).

A standard interview procedure was adopted. The appropriate person within an organisation was identified and contacted direct. Relevant contacts were identified through word of mouth and from publications such as the 'Planning Directory' (Hillier Parker 1990). The interviews were conducted around a pre-planned set of topics although the exploratory nature of most interviews meant that a rigid structure was



rarely adhered to. This flexibility was important in overcoming the preconceptions inevitable in a rigid question plan. Some organisations approached were not interviewed because they were unable or unwilling to help or did not bother to reply.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with representatives of a range of agencies concerned with TFBs (Appendix D) and with farmers who were actively involved with conservation and conversion. These interviews brought a number of benefits. They provided back-up for questionnaire findings, with many of them covering respondents not involved in the questionnaires, such as the Countryside Commission. The semi-structured interviews were also useful in covering deeper more intangible issues than postal questionnaires. The interviews also allowed expansion of certain points of interest, which came out of the questionnaire, for example the psychological problems experienced by farmers and their families in adapting to non-farm ventures.

#### 2.7.4 Case Studies

The case study approach used can be divided into three: individual sites, Tynedale District and the Pennines region.

The researching of individual sites (Appendix E) has been important in providing examples for issues raised. In addition the visits themselves have generated new ideas. A wide cross section of sites was visited, ranging from those being conserved for their historic or architectural value to elaborate residential conversions.

Tynedale District was used as a part of the case study hierarchy. The variety of settlement patterns and large size making it representative of many areas of the Pennines. As an administrative area it formed a focus for data collection and analysis.



Tynedale was also used to provide examples within the framework of the Pennine survey.

The Pennine region provided the overall case study framework, providing a focus for the research and allowing intra-regional comparisons. Using previous surveys inter-regional comparisons were possible, particularly with lowland areas, although this aspect does not form a major element of the thesis.

To summarize, case studies were an important aspect of the research. They provided a focus to the study, allowed a degree of comparison, illustrated particular points and generated new ideas.

### **2.7.5 Computer and Statistical Techniques**

Analysis was conducted on data from questionnaire surveys, listed buildings statistics and statistics from the 'Farm Diversification Scheme'. The type of data collected was most suited to univariate analysis, categorical data not really being suitable for in-depth multi-variate analysis. The data backs up and reinforces qualitative data from interviews and other research, and in some cases stands as empirical evidence in its own right.

Data analysis was conducted using the SPSSX programme, generating both univariate and multivariate data (Morris 1986, NUMAC 1988). Graphics material was produced using the CHART programme on a Research Machines NIMBUS AX personal computer. The programmes WORD 5 and WORDSTAR were used in the word processing of the text.

## 2.8 Justifying the Methodology

This section addresses some of the more obvious questions associated with the research programme. Awareness of such problems helps them to be rectified and reduces inaccuracies, by allowing for difficulties.

The concentration on the uplands is the most obvious criticism of the thesis because it largely ignores the lowland farming areas. Other studies, such as that by Wilkinson (Wilkinson 1987), use a comparative approach, with examples taken from both upland and lowland areas. Although not using such an approach, the varied areas within the Pennines allow intra-area comparison.

There are several reasons for concentrating on the uplands. Firstly, the uplands debate is lively, ongoing and of fundamental importance to the environment and community well being of the area concerned. It provided one of the major stimuli for the research. Secondly, the marginal hill farms are some of the most vulnerable areas to agricultural 'reforms', owing to low incomes and limited options for both agricultural and non-agricultural enterprises. The uplands are areas of high scenic quality and as such they have large potential for conversions servicing the tourist industry. The Pennines form a homogeneous area, which eases the practicalities of research. Finally, as chapter 5 demonstrates, the area has a significant stock of TFBs.

The case studies used are not intended to be an end in themselves. Rather they are used as illustration to support and illustrate issues raised in the research. The hierarchy of case studies outlined in section 2.3 allows flexibility and varying degrees of detail to be introduced into the thesis. At the same time the case study approach does not exclude the use of examples from outside the area, where appropriate.

The use of postal questionnaires as a centre- piece of the research could be criticised because of the potential problems of bias, representation and detail. The use of interviews and case studies offset some of these problems.

## 2.9 Summary

Following the subject outline in the introduction, this chapter has set the context within which research has been conducted. This has been achieved by the establishment of a clear research framework which draws on the subject matter and philosophy to formulate a methodology and research techniques. In conjunction with the fundamental questions outlined in the introduction, this framework forms the basis for the remainder of the thesis.



## Notes to Chapter Two

### 1. Interview

Interview held with Development Officer for the Northumbria Tourist Board on 3/5/90.

### 2. The Role of County Councils in Conversion

County Councils may become involved in two cases. Firstly, if planned conversions impinge on structure plan policy, in which case they must be consulted by districts. Secondly, developments on the counties own estate will inevitably involve the County Council.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Essential References**

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter draws together the subject content and methodology discussed in the preceding two chapters into a discussion of the main literature sources which have been utilised in the thesis. As such it represents the third element of background information prior to a discussion of the major research issues (the other two being subject and methodology).

By discussing the principal literature sources the chapter outlines the major issues and possible approaches to study. The sources mentioned are by no means exhaustive, rather they provide a flavour of the factual and methodological basis on which the research was developed. The chapter also aims to set the thesis in the context of existing studies, the critical appraisal of which was fundamental in the development of a research framework for the thesis. By outlining and describing the major literature sources used by the author, the chapter also aims to provide a basis for future research, suggesting the main issues which are not adequately covered by existing studies.

Additional literature is discussed at appropriate points in the thesis. While all references are included in a comprehensive bibliography at the end of the thesis.

### 3.2 Subject Development

This section outlines some of the literature which was fundamental in the formulation of the thesis subject, as outlined in chapter one. These principally relate to the 'uplands debate' and the 'CAP crisis'. This section also indicates many sources relating to the factual and methodological basis of the research.

Literature associated with the uplands debate falls readily into the following categories: conservation, economic, hill farming and an holistic approach.



The bulk of uplands conservation literature is concerned with nature conservation, e.g. the Institute of Terrestrial Ecology (ITE) publication 'Agriculture and Conservation in the Hills and Uplands' (Bell and Bunce 1987). Most texts on basic nature conservation have sections dealing with the uplands. Examples are the late Sir Dudley Stamp's book 'Nature Conservation in Britain' (Stamp 1974) and Ratcliffe's 'Nature Conservation Review' (Ratcliffe 1977).

A number of texts deal with the policy implications of uplands conservation. The results of the Porchester inquiry on Dartmoor form an important landmark in this field (Porchester 1977). The conflicts addressed in this report are given wider coverage in 'Countryside Conflicts: The Politics of Farming, Forestry and Conservation' (Lowe et al. 1986), the emphasis being very much on the realities of land use conflicts in the modern countryside.

An economic approach was adopted in the Exeter University study of tourism in the uplands (Davies 1983). This theme was continued on a national basis by the 1987 'Study of Rural Tourism', which was commissioned by the ETB and RDC (PA Consultants 1987). 'The Economy of Rural Communities in the National Parks' was a more wide ranging study conducted by the Tourism and Recreation Research Unit (1981). This considered the relationship between National Parks and the socio-economic development of the park regions. This theme became an important facet of the research conducted in the Pennines. Numerous structure, local and National Park plans cover the socio-economic aspects of land use planning and management in the uplands.

The hill farmers' perspective on the uplands debate receives less specific coverage. One such example is the report of the proceedings of a symposium on 'The Future of Upland Britain' (1978), edited by Tranter. This two volumed work has hill farming as

a central topic but branches out to cover a range of related natural, socio-economic and political issues. One inescapable conclusion from the report is that hill farming is too closely related to a whole range of other issues to be dealt with in isolation. 'New Life for the Hills' by MacEwan and Sinclair (1982) deals with the economics of hill farming and demonstrates the precarious economic position which forms the backdrop to this thesis. Most agricultural texts have sections on hill farming, an example being Coppock's 'Agricultural Geography of Great Britain' (Coppock 1971).

Most literature on the 'uplands debate' adopts an holistic approach, with publications dealing with all aspects of the 'uplands debate'. This includes both conservation of the natural and built heritage, and socio-economic development. Such publications offer the reader a broad understanding but there is an accompanying danger of superficiality. Such literature includes the Countryside Commission consultation document 'What future for the Uplands' (1983), and the subsequent 'A Better Future for the Uplands' (1984) which attempted to promote a more integrated approach to uplands policy. MacEwan and MacEwan did likewise in their consideration of National Parks in 1982.

Practical attempts to reconcile uplands farming with environmental priorities are documented in the Countryside Commission's publications on the 'Upland Management Experiments' conducted in the Lake District and Snowdonia (1974a, 1976, 1979). More recently this idea has been continued through the ESAs as defined in the MAFF booklet of 1989(a). Other publications in this field include the Peak Park Planning Boards - 'Integrated Rural Development' (PPJPB 1984).

Turning to the 'CAP crisis', recent literature reveals two distinct elements: the macro economics of the CAP and the impact at farm level. The first issue is covered in a range of basic texts, such as Rosemary Fennell's 'The Common Agricultural Policy of the EEC' (1979 [2nd edition 1987]), and Hill's comprehensive book 'The CAP: Past



Present and Future (1984). The Commission's own publication 'The Common Agricultural Policy' (Commission of the EC 1977), provides an insight into the workings of the CAP. Recent proposals are outlined in EC journals particularly 'Green Europe' and 'The Official Journal of the European Communities'.

The reform of the CAP is outlined in a number of important publications, one of the most significant being the Commission's own white paper 'The Future of Rural Society'(1988). This provides an overview of the situation as seen from Brussels, outlining a set of policy objectives to deal with the problems. The community based approach would seem to discount the very real regional variations. Hugh Clouts book 'A Rural Policy for the EEC?' (1984) adds to this literature on wider rural policy.

The influence of the CAP at the farm level is discussed in a number of standard agricultural textbooks, while a particularly critical approach was adopted by Richard Body in his books of 1983 and 1984. These were written before the reforms of the later 1980's and many of his arguments now appear less radical in the light of the increasing convergence of environmental and agricultural policies at the national level.

Blunden and Curry discuss the modern situation in their 1988 book 'A Future for the Countryside' which expanded on many of the ideas expounded in their earlier book 'The Changing Countryside' (1985). These two books form an interesting comparison in view of the major changes which took place between their publication. Viewed in conjunction they form a comprehensive commentary on a variety of rural issues throughout the 70's and most of the 80's. There have been attempts to relate reforms to farm structures, an example being McInerney's (1989, 1991) consideration of the relationship between diversification and existing farm businesses. This relationship was also examined by Shucksmith et. al. (1989), who based their work on empirical data from Devon and Grampian regions. They particularly pointed to misconceptions



over the merits of diversification. This theme was further amplified by Gasson (1988), who called for a greater emphasis on off-farm diversification measures. A common theme with most of the literature is the dichotomy between policy aims and the implementation on the ground, something confirmed by research in the Pennines.

During the 1980's many organisations produced policy documents relating to the 'Changing Countryside', the report of the 'Countryside Policy Review Panel' being a case in point (Countryside Policy Review Panel 1987). Another example is 'Farming and Rural Enterprise' by the Association of County Councils (1988). The CLA's Gretton and Greenwell reports (1985, 1989), and the National Farmers Union (NFU) publication 'The Way Forward' (1984), outlined the farming industry's vision of the future. Such reports inevitably have rather polarized viewpoints but looked at together they give an indication of the politics and conflicts of interest that are to be found.

There is a limited amount of published literature dealing specifically with farm diversification, although journals such as 'Farm Development Review', 'Farm Management' and the 'Journal of Agricultural Economics' carry regular features. Books by Slee (1987) and Carruthers (1986) outline the practicalities of a range of alternative enterprises. Some literature covers specific initiatives, the Countryside Commission's publications on Camping and Bunkhouse Barns being examples (Countryside Commission 1980, 1986). Similarly, tourist accommodation is dealt with in various publications such as MAFF booklet '2005' which discusses 'Farmhouse and Self Catering Accommodation on the Farm' (1985a). Davies (1983) considered farm tourism in the uplands in his book 'The Role of Farm Tourism in the LFA's of England and Wales'. These issues are not confined to the 1980's, as evidenced in Burton's 1967 book 'Outdoor Recreation Enterprises in Problem Rural Areas' (Burton 1967).

The literature described in this section indicates the type of issues which stimulated an interest in the research and the basis from which the specific research subject was derived.

### **3.3 Conservation and Conversion of TFBs**

The conservation and conversion of TFBs is rarely considered in isolation. The few available publications fall into 4 broad categories: general texts; resource literature; policy and specific initiatives.

#### **3.3.1 General Texts**

A small number of existing texts have a similar subject matter and methodology to that used in the thesis. Inevitably these publications have been important in the development of the thesis. They have acted as a 'baseline' for assessing the 'location' and 'orientation' of the subject both in terms of subject and methodology.

'Alternative Uses for Redundant Farm Buildings' by Pauline Wilkinson (1987) is perhaps the most wide ranging publication on the subject. Essentially a practical guide, it is based around a number of hypotheses. In addition it raises issues such as definitions, 'values' and methodology, but often fails to elaborate on what are some of the most important questions.

'Superb Conversions' (Watkins and Winter 1988) is a second key text. Commissioned by the CPRE the report adopts a case study approach using planning statistics, interview and questionnaire material to formulate a set of wide ranging conclusions and recommendations. Again it is essentially descriptive, dealing with the practicalities of conservation and conversion without addressing the underlying causes and motivations.



Several research publications concentrate on trying to assess the extent of the redundancy problem and the opportunities that it presents. The Farm Buildings Group of the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food (MAFF) undertook a study of redundant farm buildings in 1985 (Hill 1985). A sample of 90 farms was surveyed using questionnaires and site visits, the emphasis being very much on the nature and size of the 'resource' available. Having quantified the resource, the report then goes on to discuss the implications of the findings. A similar approach was used by Thomas (1987) in a survey of rural Avon for the local Community Council and RDC. 'Old Buildings- New Opportunities' (Thomas 1987) evaluated the potential resource of buildings for conversion, but made few attempts to discuss the implications of the findings. In assessing the potential resource these two reports form a useful comparison with surveys of actual conversions such as those by Wilkinson (1987) or, Watkins and Winter (1988).

There are several other texts which, while not based on a particular piece of original research, are wide ranging and cover most aspects of the subject. By way of example Hampshire and Essex County Councils have each produced reports on the subject (1979, 1982). The ready availability of planning data coupled with the 'hands on experiences' of the authors make these useful sources, although the detailed information on structure and design is of limited application to the Pennines, where vernacular traditions are very different. Gillian Darley followed this 'planning report' approach in her book 'A Future for Farm Buildings' (1988) published by the conservation group SAVE. While not based on primary research, these publications have proved useful as sources of information and for comparison with this thesis.

In summary the basic texts adopt two approaches. Either they examine the practicalities of conservation and conversion or they assess the potential (resource) for conservation and conversion. Few attempts have been made to link these two aspects. Consequently many texts appear to incorporate a number of undeclared assumptions



in relation to the nature of the resource and the motives for conservation and conversion. Such texts study applied issues without considering the stand-point of research, something which this thesis aims to address.

### 3.3.2 Resource Based Literature

A range of literature concentrates on the resource of vernacular farm buildings. The work of Ronald Brunskill is particularly important in this field, notably his 'Illustrated Handbook of Vernacular Architecture' and 'Traditional Farm Buildings of Britain' (1978, 1982). Another important contributor to the discipline has been Nigel Harvey, whose two books 'Old Farm Buildings' and 'A History of Farm Buildings in England and Wales', give in-depth descriptions of the farm building resource (1970, 1987). In a similar vein are Lake's 'Historic Farm Buildings' (1989) and 'Discovering Traditional Farm Buildings' by Peters (1981). All these texts give a general overview of TFBs while the 'Illustrated Handbook of Vernacular Architecture' also discusses the nature of vernacular study. Few attempts are made to establish linkages forwards or backwards to deal with issues of end-use and value respectively. This is something which the thesis does attempt to do by emphasising the linkage between process and resource, via the medium of 'value'.

Some publications deal with a particular aspect of the resource, an historical subdivision being adopted by Roy Brigdens 'Victorian Farms' (1986) and Robinson in 'Georgian Model Farms' (1983). A geographical approach is also possible, an example being 'The Historical Farm Buildings of Wales' (Williams 1986). In the Pennines 'Buildings in the Yorkshire Dales' traces the development of the building stock of that region (Raistrick 1976). Reynolds continued this theme in her detailed examination of the buildings of Swaledale in 1985. For the Northumberland area, there is 'Historic Buildings of the Northumberland National Park' (Grundy 1988).

A range of technical publications deal with the care and maintenance of traditional buildings, most notably John Sell's 'First Aid Repair to Traditional Farm Buildings' (1987).

Resource based literature seems to be either a general overview or deals with specific topical, temporal or spatial aspects. Few attempts have been made to discuss the value of the resource or end uses. Given the specialist nature of the topic of discussion these limited aims may be justified, but these approaches do seem to leave some 'grey areas', particularly with respect to the value of TFBs.

### 3.3.3 Policy Based Literature

Most of the 'general texts' discuss matters of policy, but obviously they become dated. Thus primary sources are crucial to understanding latter day policy developments.

Government policy is outlined in circulars and planning policy guidance notes (PPG). Relevant policy statements include: circular 16/87 'Development Involving Agricultural Land', Planning Policy Guidance 7 'Rural Enterprise and Development' and its draft revision version presently under consideration. To a lesser extent PPG's 2 (Green Belts) and 4 (Industrial Development) and circular 8/87 (Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas) are relevant to the study. The latter circular indicates policies on conservation and conversion of historic buildings.

Policies on barn conversions are found in most local, structure and national park plans. By way of example, policy EN6 of the Burnley District Local Plan First Review states that:

"Applicants wishing to convert existing buildings outside the urban boundary to non-residential uses will be required to show that the proposal will not be detrimental to the existing environmental conditions and quality of the surrounding area." (Burnley DC 1990).



Some councils also produce design guides and guidance notes on barn conservation and conversion, an example being Pendle District Council's 'Guide-lines to Control the Provision of Camping Barns in the Forest of Bowland AONB' (Pendle DC 1988).

Various other statutory and non-statutory bodies have produced policy documents. Concerned about the potentially damaging effects of conversions, English Heritage produced a statement on the 'Conversion of Historic Farm Buildings' (English Heritage 1990). 'Superb Conversions' can be viewed as the CPRE's contribution to the debate. The 1987 report of the Countryside Policy Review Panel 'New Opportunities in the Countryside' represented the views of a range of organisations. The Countryside Commission set out its views in its publications 'Incentives for a New Direction for Farming' (Countryside Commission 1989a) and 'Planning for a Greener Countryside' (Countryside Commission 1989b).

Development organisations have also produced relevant publications. The English Tourist Board (ETB) set out its strategy in 'Visitors in the Countryside' (ETB 1988). The Rural Development Commission has tended to concentrate on 'practical publications', however 'Old Buildings New Opportunities' (RDC 1986) gives some indication of RDC policy on the subject. While the consultation document 'Meeting the Challenge of Agricultural Adjustment' (1991) adopts a more wide ranging approach calling for a reorientation away from farm based to more widely based rural development. The RDC quarterly 'Rural Focus' gives a regular indication of RDC policy views. Community groups have also contributed to the policy debate. For instance 'A Rural Strategy' (Rural Voice 1987) outlines the views of this alliance of 10 countryside organisations.

The farming lobby has been quick to recognise that change is inevitable. As such there have been a range of publications aimed at 'damage limitation' and extracting the best possible deal for farmers in the 'new countryside'. The CLA set out its views



in the report of the 'Greenwell Working Party' 'Enterprise in the Rural Environment' (CLA 1989a). This report promoted the case for a relaxation of planning permission on diversifications in return for greater controls on siting and design of developments. The National Farmers Union (NFU) laid out its views in the publication 'The Way Forward' (1984).

By its very nature, policy literature is not particularly analytical. The aim is usually to outline the broad policy objectives of the campaigning bodies as clearly as possible. Comparing policy documents from the various fields of interest can give some insight into the thinking behind policy making. However, most policy documents appear to be based on assumptions, such as the assumed value of buildings, or the right of agriculture to state support.

### 3.3.4 Specific Initiatives

The 1987 'Farming and Rural Enterprise' package (MAFF 1987a) laid the foundation for a range of initiatives, including the Farm Diversification Scheme. More specific documentation was produced at a later date. This was followed up by MAFF's 'Environmentally Sensitive Areas' (1989a) which outlined the policy and procedure for this designation. Several National Park Authorities have promoted local schemes, examples being the 'The North York Moors Farm Scheme' ( North York Moors National Park Cmtee 1988), and Dales Barns and Walls Conservation Scheme (Yorkshire Dales National Park Cmtee 1990).

Journals such as the 'Country Landowner' and 'Rural Focus' regularly carry articles relating to conservation and conversion.

### 3.4 Summary

The resource, policy and practical aspects of the subject are well documented. The main criticism is that too many texts assume pre-conceived notions of the subject and show little or no attempt to establish a justification or motivation for conservation and conversion. Neither is there much attempt to establish linkages between the various facets of the subject.

The question 'why conserve?' was identified as a fundamental question in chapter 1 but has received limited attention in existing literature. Historic, architectural and scenic aspects of TFBs are often considered but few texts attempt to assess their intrinsic value both from economic and aesthetic aspects. Having said this, many of the principles associated with the growing environmental movement have inevitably influenced the way TFBs are regarded by society.

Linkages between the various aspects of the subject have received only partial coverage most notably the connection between the resource of TFBs and the processes of conservation and conversion (the value of the former provides a major *raison d'être* for conservation and conversion). Addressing these issues requires the application to TFBs of ideas outlined in general writing on landscape value, such as 'Landscape Meanings and Values' (Penning-Roswell and Lowenthal 1986) and 'The Visual Elements of Landscape' (Jackles 1987). Newby related landscape value to wider rural issues in his 1988 book 'The Countryside in Question', while his earlier publications (1978, 1979) give an insight into the socio-political and philosophical values which underlie landscape values. Indeed he raises many issues of relevance to the thesis, such as the changing balance of rural political power. Marion Shoard (1980, 1981) adopted a more radical approach in calling for a greater appreciation and protection of landscapes. Several authors have attempted to address landscape dynamics, most notably 'Future Landscapes' by MacEwan (1976). A more systematic approach was adopted in the Countryside Commission's (1974b) Agricultural

Landscape Study of which was updated by Westmacott and Worthington in 1984. This provided a temporal record of agricultural change.

The wider implications of conservation and conversion receive general coverage in many publications. Visible advantages such as job creation are identified, but more complex aspects such as the link between traditional farm landscapes and tourism are given less coverage. The scale of such considerations means that it would be impractical to focus on them in anything other than a restricted and specialist study. However given the limited direct economic value of TFBs (chapter 8), such considerations take on considerable importance and deserve recognition if not measurement. For example, does residential conversion have a particular role to play in the provision of affordable rural housing?

The descriptive basis of this chapter has been aimed at complimenting the previous two chapters which outlined the subject and methodology respectively. Identifying the major sources of secondary information indicates the factual basis of the thesis. At the same time critical appraisal of the approach adopted by certain key texts allows the thesis methodology and subject to be set in the context of existing research. This appraisal is particularly important as the remainder of the thesis only gives passing reference to these sources in support of empirical research material from the Pennines.

Perhaps most importantly, the chapter represents an information source for further research, providing a sample of some of the main sources of information relating to the issues discussed in the remainder of the thesis.



## **Chapter Four**

### **The Agricultural Context**

## 4.1 Introduction

The aim of this section is to outline the development of the agricultural industry as it relates to traditional farm buildings (TFBs) (table 4.1). Concurrent non-agricultural factors are outlined in table 4.2 and described in greater depth in later chapters.

The emphasis is on the twentieth century. This historical approach provides a context for the subject and avoids assigning too much significance and uniqueness to contemporary trends. While concentrating on agricultural policy, structural and technological change, reference is made to wider rural issues where appropriate.

The historical perspective of British agriculture falls into the following sub-divisions: pre 1900, 1900 to 1939, 1939 to 1945, 1945 to 1980 and 1980 onwards.

## 4.2 Agriculture Before 1900

The present system of land ownership and management has its roots in the 14th century. Following the outbreak of the Black Death in 1348, the feudal system (1) began to break down. In its place there developed a class of yeoman farmers (2), stimulated by cheap land prices and the decline of serfdom (Yelling 1973, Hoskins 1970).

By 1500 population levels were rising once again and the period up to 1700 represented the zenith of the yeoman farmer culture. Yelling described the period as representing the "final flowering of a traditional peasant culture with roots extending deep into the past." (1973 p126).

This was the 'age of improvement' characterised by widespread innovation in agriculture (Darby, Yelling 1973). It was also a 'period of rebuilding' (3), many modern villages having their origins during this period. As Hoskins commented "The

Table 4.1

**Major Agricultural Events Which Have  
Influenced the Conservation and Conversion  
of Traditional Farm Buildings**

Event	Significance
'Age of Rebuilding' 1570-1770	The period of rebuilding has provided a rich legacy of traditional farm buildings which survives into the modern era. In the Pennines the period was characterised by large scale building and re-building of stone farmsteads. In the Pennines the 18th century was the main period of building, slightly later than many other areas of the country.
Enclosure	As an on-going process enclosure has no fixed date, however after 1750 it was carried out under Act of Parliament which served to increase the pace of change. Enclosure led to the building of dispersed farmsteads, as farmers chose to live on their land. By duplicating buildings such as barns, enclosure also increased the stock of TFBs.
Agricultural Recessions	The agricultural recessions of the late 19th century and the 1930's resulted in the curtailment of most new buildings. Repairs were minimized such that the stock of farm buildings deteriorated. On balance the recessions have probably resulted in a larger number of traditional farm buildings surviving into the modern era.
World War Two	The outbreak of war signalled an end to recession, but the priority of maximizing output meant that there was little time for new building. More importantly, the war demonstrated the strategic importance of domestic agriculture, and the consequent need for state support.
Agriculture Act 1947	This Act led to the creation of a comprehensive system of state support for agriculture. This principle has largely remained, even in the present climate of reform. The emphasis on intensive agriculture has resulted in the replacement of TFBs by modern farm buildings.
Entry into the Common Agricultural Policy of the EEC 1973	Entry into the CAP retained the comprehensive state support for agriculture, although in a different format. Vast amounts of community funds have been used to subsidize ever increasing agricultural production. A result of this intensification has been the loss of many cherished features of the British countryside, including TFBs. On the positive side, membership of the EEC does give access to huge financial resources which, given the political will, could be spent on conservation.
Milk Quotas 1984	Although of limited importance itself, the introduction of milk quotas in 1984 has symbolic significance, as one of the first tangible attempts to tackle EC farm surpluses and the associated budgetary crisis. Since 1984 there have been a wide range of other initiatives, with similar aims. These initiatives have been important in increasing the numbers of redundant TFBs, such as dairy units. They also heralded an increased emphasis on diversification and enterprise in agriculture.
EC Regulation 797/85 Article 19	This regulation allowed for the establishment of ESA's. The ESA's were revolutionary in that they offered comprehensive payments for environmental aims, including the maintenance of TFBs. ESA's have raised the prospect of comprehensive state support for the conservation of TFBs.
'Alternative Land Use and the Rural Economy' (ALURE)	The emphasis on diversification and enterprise was given official sanction in the 1987 'ALURE' package which introduced a range of initiatives aimed at encouraging diversification. As such, it served to increase interest in the conversion of TFBs.



**Table 4.2 Major Non-Agricultural Events Which Have Influenced the Conservation and Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings**

Event	Significance
SPAB 1877	The establishment of SPAB, marked the emergence of an organised building conservation movement, and reflected the Victorian preservationist lobby. SPAB has since become involved in the conservation of TFBs
Laissez-faire trade policies late 19th early 20th centuries	Laissez-faire trade policies were a major factor behind the agricultural recessions of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The recessions served to restrict new building on farms, thus a large legacy of TFBs has survived, although they are often in a poor state of repair.
Town and Country Planning Act 1947	This act introduced a comprehensive planning system which has been modified by later legislation. This planning system has affected TFBs in a number of ways, most notably through permitted development rights and the principle of protecting farmland from new development. More specifically, listed buildings protect some TFBs.
Post-war Socio- economic Changes	A number of post-war social changes have had an influence on TFBs. Increasing out-migration from cities has led to great pressure for housing in rural areas, residential conversion has been one option for those seeking their 'dream home' in the countryside. Increased affluence and leisure time has resulted in greater demand for tourist and recreation facilities some of which can be provided in traditional farm buildings.
Post-war Socio- Political Changes	Post-war socio-political changes have also affected TFB's. As with most of the conservation movement, the conservation of TFBs has been seen as increasingly important. The post-modernist period has resulted in a greater value being placed on the vernacular heritage of which TFB's are an integral part.
'Lifting the Burden' 1985	This white paper was of limited importance itself, but it was one of the first tangible signs of a re-appraisal of the role of planning in rural development. As the first of a number of policy documents aimed at relaxing planning controls on rural development, it resulted in increased pressure on planning authorities to permit the conversion of TFB's.
'Conversion of Historic Farm Buildings' 1990	This policy document by the governments official advisers on historic buildings (English Heritage), called for stronger controls on the conversion of traditional farm buildings of historical value, whether this will herald a shift to tighter controls on conversion remains to be seen.

English village ... is essentially the product of these two centuries between about 1570 and 1770." (1970 p162-163). Most buildings were constructed of less durable materials, such as wood, with only the more prestigious farmhouses being stone built (Cantor 1987, Emery 1973). Cantor described the period as notable for its "wealth of substantial farmhouses" (1987 p77), many of which survive today. The Pennines blessed with abundant building stone tended to have a greater range of more sturdy construction. Even the more lowly farm buildings were of stone construction (Emery 1973). As well as contributing to the present resource of TFBs the period also saw early examples of barn conversion. Cantor mentioned a barn conversion in Cumbria: "Swarthmoor Quaker Meeting House, near Ulverston, in Cumbria, a simple barn converted into a meeting house by George Fox in 1688" (Cantor 1987 p79).

The 'age of improvement' laid the foundations for the 'agricultural revolution' of 1700 to 1870. The revolution was marked by huge technical advances, in particular the introduction of steam power onto the farmstead. There were also improvements in husbandry, such as the work of Thomas Coke on the Holkham estate, which even today is a centre of conservation and conversion work (Whitlock 1983). The mid 19th century was particularly buoyant, described by Coppock as the 'Golden Age' of British agriculture (Coppock 1973a). This was an age of enterprise and innovation fuelled by the ever expanding urban markets.

Enclosure (4) had been going on, under private agreement, since the earliest times. After 1750 it was carried out under Act of Parliament and increased in pace. So by the mid 19th century very little 'open land' (5) remained (Cantor 1987, Darby, Emery, Harris 1973). Enclosure is relevant to the thesis because it led to the development of dispersed farmsteads and, in some areas, field barn systems (chapter 5).

The 18th and 19th centuries also witnessed accelerated in-migration to rural areas from urban areas, a process with important implications for the conservation and conversion of TFBs (chapters 6,7). Harley described this migration into rural areas:

"the merchant princes of the manufacturing districts who eagerly buy up any nook where they may escape from there own smoke, and enjoy pure air and bracing breezes, with shooting and fishing." (1973 p552).

Equally, Wordsworth voiced concerns over the destruction of the vernacular architecture by 'incomers' (6) who "if they wish to become residents, erect new mansions out of the ruins of the ancient cottages." (Merchant 1951 p127). Evidence demonstrates that the issue of conservation and conversion in the uplands is not new.

After 1870 recession set in, and lasted until the outbreak of the Second World War, the principle causes being a combination of cheap food imports (7) and government laissez- faire policies (8). The recession led to a reversion from arable to grazing land and an increase in vacant land. Out migration to the cities became widespread, such that, between 1851 and 1911 the numbers living in rural districts fell from 8.9 to 7.9 million and the share of population from 50% to 22% (Coppock 1973a). There were even attempts to diversify. Coppock describes diversification both inside and outside agriculture, for example horticulture, shooting and outdoor recreation (Coppock 1973a and 1973b).

The effects of the recession varied in space and time, with some areas of northern England faring rather well, leading Coppock to conclude that "there was good competition for farms in Northumberland and little visible sign of depression in Cumberland." (1973a p610). Conversely, the arable lowlands suffered most under the recession. Agriculture entered the 20th century in a state of recession, part of an economy dominated by urban, industrial concerns and no longer sympathetic to farmers needs.



### 4.3 Agriculture 1900 to 1939

The period between 1900 and the outbreak of World War 1 was marked by a continuation of the laissez-faire policies of the late 19th century. Free market principles dominated Britain and the resultant low food prices were seen as beneficial by the urban majority. As the premier manufacturing nation, Britain saw no benefit in protectionism. Indeed low food prices led to cheaper and more competitive manufactured products. In addition, food production throughout the British Empire and the existence of a strong navy ensured food imports, thereby reducing the strategic significance of domestic agriculture (Self and Storing 1962, Tracy 1989). At the same time the political power of agriculture was very limited, the National Farmers Union only being formed in 1908. Continuing decline in agricultural employment further reduced the lobbying power of the farming community.

Two other important trends marked this pre-war period. Firstly there was the beginning of a limited agricultural revival, as outlined by Tracy:

"By the turn of the century the agricultural depression had spent its force, and the years leading up to the First World War were favourable to farmers in both North America and Europe." (1989 p18-19).

Secondly protectionism began to be introduced in many European countries. By contrast, Britain stuck rigidly to free trade policies (Coppock 1971).

The outbreak of the First World War resulted in measures to stimulate domestic agriculture. 'County Agricultural Executive Committees' were established with the power to enforce the ploughing-up of grassland and ensure efficient farm management. Guaranteed prices were introduced for wheat, oats and potatoes. These measures resulted in an agricultural expansion, with the arable area increasing by about 2 million acres between 1914 and 1918 (Dewey 1989, Whitlock 1983).

In the post-war period the 1920 Agriculture Act maintained the system of guaranteed prices but Treasury pressure led to the act being repealed after only one year (Sheail 1981). Agriculture was once again at the mercy of the free market (Woodforde 1983).

The 1920's was marked by a return of recession as prices fell and farmers struggled to pay off debts accrued during war-time expansion. Ralph Whitlock described his own farming experience of the 1920's as "peasant-style agriculture" (1983 p189). By the time of the stock market crash in 1929 there was a grain surplus of 28 million tons (1 years export) and prices collapsed (Tracy 1989). Recession reached its nadir in the early 1930's. With the economy in crisis, the new coalition government finally abandoned the free trade policy. This reflected the pressure from the global shift to protectionism and rising nationalism which led to an increased value being put on domestic farming (Coppock 1971).

Various types of protectionism were introduced into British agriculture. The 'Import Duties Act' of 1932 imposed a 10% duty on some food imports. Subsidies were introduced on most major agricultural products (Tracy 1989). Marketing organisations were another form of state support, the most famous being the Milk Marketing Board, which was established in 1933. International trade agreements were formulated, the most important being the 'Ottawa Agreement' under which Britain gave preference to imports from the Empire.

An inevitable result of protectionism was a distortion of the market. For example, the British wheat area increased by 600 000 acres despite consistently low prices (Tracy 1989). The League of Nations attempted to revive international trade by formulating agreements on wheat and sugar. But these efforts largely failed due to rising nationalism.

By the Second World War British agriculture was in a state of depression and state support was partial and piecemeal. The arable area had reached its lowest level since statistics began (1866). Less than 30% of British food was produced domestically (Stamp 1948). Technological advances were made but were rarely taken up by a depressed industry. The state of the farm economy limited investment in buildings, although some new building did occur, mainly Dutch Barns and Silos (Woodforde 1983). The general trend was for continued use of buildings dating from the Victorian period. Maintenance was minimized and estate management "went by the board" (Stamp 1948 p404). As a result buildings gradually fell into disrepair, a problem described by Nigel Harvey "Year by year, the patient processes of decay and disintegration probed for weaknesses in the unmaintained buildings." (1970 p168). Whitlock re-iterated this theme when describing the late 1930's "Victorian buildings with which most farms were equipped were falling to pieces, hedges were untrimmed, fences broken down," (1983 p192).

By 1939 there was a depressed farm industry working in an impoverished, un-diversified and depopulating countryside. A situation which equally applied to farm buildings: "There can never have been a larger number of crumbling farm buildings than in 1939," (Woodforde 1983 p58).

## 4.4 World War Two

Although agriculture was in a poor state at the outbreak of hostilities, at least there was a prepared plan for food supplies. The experience of food supply in the First World War had convinced government of the need for state intervention (Hammond 1951). Efforts to boost domestic agriculture included: the requisitioning of food stocks, price control, rationing, price fixing and production subsidies. In November 1940 the government gave an undertaking to maintain fixed prices and guaranteed markets for the duration of the war and for one year thereafter (Bowler 1979, Smith



1990). Despite these incentives the initial aim of the government was not maximum output, Churchill wanting "large but not excessive" increases in food production (Tracy 1989 p216), due to concerns about post-war re-adjustment. As supplies ran low, circumstances eventually forced a greater expansion.

Agriculture responded to wartime incentives by increasing production by around 60% (Woodforde 1983). Arable areas were greatly expanded and there were technological changes, for example silage making increased.

Little new building took place. Usually older structures continued in use Woodforde estimated that "no more than 39% of English and Welsh farms could be classed as satisfactory." (1983 p59). By contrast the Scott report claimed that the wartime countryside had "put aside the bedraggled condition" and had resumed its "former well-kept appearance" (Ministry of Works and Planning 1942 p33).

## 4.5 1945 to 1980

Despite the assurances of government, there were fears that agriculture would once again be abandoned by the state in the post-war period. These concerns proved to be largely unfounded. Food shortages continued well into peacetime. Indeed for a time shortages were worse (Hammond 1951). The government responded by establishing the most comprehensive system of agricultural state support ever seen with the 1947 Agriculture Act aiming to create "a stable and efficient agricultural industry capable of producing such part of the nation's food ... as in the national interest". The emphasis was on stability and efficiency. To achieve this, the legislation established guaranteed prices for most food products, with a system of deficiency payments being adopted in 1951 (9) (Self and Storing 1962, Tracy 1989). These policies were justified on both economic and social criteria. Throughout the 1950's and 60's policy was

dominated by the advice of the Scott report that; 'every agricultural acre counts' (Ministry of Works and Planning 1942). As Blunden and Curry stated, the feeling was that, "agriculture and forestry should be given free reign to develop" (1988 p1). The idea of state support was entrenched by a succession of agriculture acts. In 1975 the white paper 'Food From Our Own Resources' (MAFF) still re-affirmed the notion of maximizing farm production.

Entry into the 'Common Agricultural Policy' (CAP) of the EEC changed the method of farm support in Britain. The CAP operates a 'buffer stock policy' (10), a system which has given rise to product surpluses, because of the way quotas have been applied. British agriculture with its large and efficient farms tended to benefit from community policies designed to help less efficient units on the continent. In this period the CAP was an important element in the rise of 'agri-business' (11).

Spending on CAP is administered through the 'European Agricultural Guarantee and Guidance Fund' (FEOGA). The majority of this fund is spent on market support (price guarantees) with very limited investment going into structural policies even though efforts to boost structural spending have been a central theme in CAP politics, for example the 'Mansholt Plan' (EC 1969) (12), which in many respects was ahead of its time. Fennell stresses that at the inception of the EEC, structural and social policies were not as clearly formulated as market policies; "the details of the market and price regimes were more fully worked out than were the measures of a structural and social nature." (1979 p171). The concentration on the ever growing 'Guarantee' section of CAP led eventually to a series of budget crises and subsequent efforts to reform the CAP.

The expansion and prosperity of agriculture in the period was reflected in much new building work on farms. This was predominantly non-vernacular in style and constructed of modern pre-fabricated materials.

## 4.6 1980 Onwards

The key consideration from the 1980's onwards has been the crisis in the Common Agricultural Policy and how to tackle it. The factors giving rise to surplus production and budgetary problems are fundamental to an understanding of contemporary rural issues and provide the *raison d'être* for the thesis. Blunden and Curry underline this in their book 'A Future for Our Countryside': "The core of changing rural policies in the late 1980's is clearly agricultural over-production." (1988 p28). Moreover the modern situation has few parallels leading the Countryside Policy Review Panel to conclude that Agriculture faced an "unprecedented situation" (1987 p9).

It is essential to consider the reasons for the budget crisis. The CAP was formulated during the 1950's and 1960's when there were only six members of the community. The policy worked well while domestic production was lower than demand and levies on imports could raise valuable revenue. The fundamental problem has been that growth in expenditure has outstripped the ability to pay. Agricultural spending has risen by 13.2%/year, while the community budget has only gone up by 12.6%/year. Since 1983 spending on agriculture has consistently accounted for more than 60% of total EC spending, with only 2% of this being spent on 'guidance' (structural) measures (Ibid). The ever expanding production of European agriculture has taken a huge and disproportionate share of the EC budget, a situation vividly described by Blunden and Curry: "Like the proverbial cuckoo, the CAP has grown into a greedy beast, devouring a large slice of the EC's resources and pushing other policies out of the nest." (1988 p28).

The organisation and bureaucracy of the EC has made reforms difficult to implement with individual countries being fearful of the social and economic consequences of reform measures. Consensus has been hard to achieve, however pressure for reform



grew from within as the huge strain imposed on the EC finances became unmanageable. Eventually the EC was forced to concede the need for fundamental reform in its 1985 consultation paper 'Perspectives for the CAP'.

The emergence of the EC as a net exporter of farm produce has de-stabilised established markets especially when surpluses have been 'dumped' at subsidized prices. As a result a trade war has been threatened over farm produce (Countryside Policy Review Panel 1987). The GATT round of trade talks has been attempting to rectify the position since 1986, with limited success. The EC itself is well aware of the need for international accountability but "the Common Agricultural Policy must take account of the international realities" (1985 p1). Further pressure to reform the CAP has come from consumers concerned about high food prices and from the growing conservation lobby worried about the environmental effects of intensive agriculture.

A combination of financial reality, political pressure and social trends have meant that reform of agriculture has become essential both within the CAP and in the wider international context. Blunden and Curry considered that the approach to reform depended on which factor of production was deemed to be in surplus: land, labour or capital. Not surprisingly the agricultural interests have the surplus of land, being less willing to consider reduced capital and labour inputs (1988).

Nevertheless the idea of 'too much labour' constitutes an essential element of structural reform, market intervention having helped to preserve small inefficient farm units, especially on the continent. Attempts at reform, such as the Mansholt Plan have been opposed by the farming lobby, and by national governments fearful of the socio-economic and political consequences of such measures.

Structural reform offers long term solutions, but more urgent short term action is needed. For this reason the pricing mechanisms may offer a better hope of achieving progress. At its most extreme this would involve an entirely free agricultural market. More likely would be a price cut, although this presents problems in deciding on the size of any cut. The decision affects the livelihood of thousands of farmers. A small price cut could simply encourage farmers to intensify production to compensate for lost revenue. While larger cuts would put many out of business.

The most likely policy is to develop present initiatives which combine price cuts with income support. 'Less Favoured Areas' (LFA) (13) and 'Environmentally Sensitive Areas'(ESA) (14) are examples of existing income support measures. The 1985 'Green Paper' 'Perspectives for the Common Agricultural Policy' advocated a mixture of income support and regional policy to alleviate the adverse effects of price cuts. Savings on price guarantees may release some resources for investment on income support (Commission of the European Communities 1985). As the 'Countryside Policy Review Panel' concluded, price cuts should be accompanied by "positive measures to promote desirable adjustments." (1987 p13). In other words some form of income and or regional support, is needed.

Other reform measures include quotas, on both inputs and outputs, an example of the latter being the milk quotas introduced in 1984 (15). Administrative and operating difficulties have meant that quotas have not received widespread support.

Another approach to agricultural reform is to reduce the amount of land in production. This idea of land diversion had been practised in the USA for many years and was adopted by the EC in 1988 under the name of 'Set-Aside' (16) (EC 1988a, Ervin 1987). While attractive in theory, Set-Aside has practical problems. Firstly, however attractive the incentives, in many cases only the poorer land will be taken out of production. Secondly, the scheme is difficult and costly to administer. Thirdly, there

are ethical questions about paying farmers to do nothing. Fourthly, there is little incentive to make positive use of land that is Set-Aside (Countryside Policy Review Panel 1987). Set-Aside can also take the form of encouraging early retirement, or 'extensification', as agreed by the EEC in 1987, and envisaged by Mansholt as far back as 1968 (EC 1969).

A final form of agricultural 'reform' is to encourage diversification into new enterprises. This can support farm incomes if not alleviate totally loss of revenue. In some cases it serves to reduce production. It is this option which has the most relevance to the conservation and conversion of TFBs.

#### **4.7 The Recessions of 1870-1930s and 1980s: A Comparison**

At this juncture it is useful to compare the major periods of agricultural recession. As part of the historicist approach, this allows conclusions to be drawn about the present recession, which is such a crucial element in the study.

The large estates were best equipped to overcome the earlier recession. As Curtler suggested in 1909:

"where are the best farm buildings, where the best cottages, where does the owner carry on a home farm often for the assistance of the tenant..... if not on the larger estates?" (p322).

Research suggests that a similar situation exists today.

In the earlier recession rural out-migration was a major cause for concern prompting Curtler to comment that "after foreign competition, the great danger to English farming was the lack of labour" (p315), an indication of the negative influences of urbanisation on rural areas. Labour shortages are not a major cause of the present recession indeed, out-migration is an effect of recession.



Increased indebtedness coincided with restructuring of farm support measures to become a major cause of farm bankruptcies in the 1980's. Similar problems existed in 1909 as Curtler outlined:

"Many... had bought land in good times when land was dear and left a large portion of the purchase money on mortgage, with the result that the interest on the mortgage was now more than the rent of the land" (p310-311).

By the late 19th century the factory based industrial revolution had led to the elimination of most of the traditional rural craft industries. So when recession hit, the smaller and less diverse rural economy suffered. Trying to re-establish an industrial base has been seen as a way of reviving rural economies in the modern era, something considered in detail in chapter six. In a similar fashion, the shift from a dual economy to full-time farming in the former lead mining areas of the Pennines, such as Swaledale, has resulted in the areas being poorly equipped to overcome agricultural recession. It is generally recognised that a diversified economic base is best able to overcome the effects of recession.

The 1870-1930's recession had its greatest impact in the arable lowlands (Perry 1974). The 1980's recession has had a severe impact on farm incomes in the arable lowlands, but has raised particular fears about the future of the uplands.

Diversification both within and outside agriculture was used as a way of overcoming recession in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Later chapters indicate that the same is happening today.

## **4.8 British Response: Agricultural Adjustment**

Returning to the present recession this section outlines the attempts to adjust British agriculture to the changing situation.

Recession has adversely affected farm incomes for example, English hill livestock farms suffered a 20% fall between 1982/83 and 1989/90 (MAFF 1990). Land prices were not greatly affected by the recession. Statistics indicate that they experienced a modest increase, although nothing like the increases of the 1970's 'land boom'. Employment levels have fallen, such that agriculture now constitutes just 2.2% of the labour force (Sallis W. D. 1990). Most informed opinion agrees that the impact of the present recession is worst on marginal land, such as the uplands region of study.

British agriculture has responded to recent trends with some quite radical departures from established practices, although the fundamental structure has yet to change. The 1981 'Wildlife and Countryside Act' introduced mandatory notification for farmers wanting to carry out changes in Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). This reduction in freedom was tempered by the introduction of cash payments, the (then) Nature Conservancy Council (NCC) being obliged to compensate farmers for income forgone (Blunden and Curry 1985). Farmers were thus being encouraged to be more environmentally aware, but at the tax- payers expense.

The growing CAP crisis made policy changes inevitable, but precise proposals were slow to be formulated. The introduction of milk quotas in 1984 had a serious impact on some sections of the British dairy industry, but recovery was rapid for the survivors, Blunden and Curry noting a rise in net farm incomes since 1984 (1988 p42).

In 1987 5 ESA's were established with more following in 1988. These designations have dual environmental and socio-economic aims, with TFBs forming an important element of the scheme. Section 18 of the 1986 Agriculture Act describes one aim of the ESA as; "to protect buildings or other objects of archaeological, architectural or historic interest in an area" (MAFF 1989a p48).

The following criteria have to be satisfied: national environmental significance; conservation is linked to farming practices; farming change poses a threat; and the area forms a discrete unit of environmental interest (MAFF 1989a p6). ESAs operate by means of five year management agreements, with farm practices constrained within agreed limits. Despite being on a voluntary basis, take up has been very high with inclusion of 87% of the land in the 'target area' in 1989 (p45).

The government published the 'Farming and Rural Enterprise Package' in 1987 as part of the ALURE (agriculture, land use and rural enterprise) policy. The purpose was to find new ways of supporting farm incomes, thereby alleviating the adverse effects of reforms. Several new schemes were introduced under the ALURE, including the Farm Diversification Scheme (FDS) (17), Set-Aside. The former being made law under the 1988 'Farmland and Rural Development Act'.

The British Set-Aside scheme was introduced in 1988 in fulfilment of EC regulation 1094/88. The introduction of the 'Countryside Premium Scheme' (18) in 1989 represented an attempt to find positive uses for Set-Aside land, by offering top-up grants on a range of environmental projects (CC 1989a,1990).

The FDS has great relevance to this thesis. Beginning in January 1988 the scheme was designed to; "assist existing agricultural businesses to develop alternative commercial uses for agricultural buildings and land" (MAFF 1987b p1). Grants are available for capital projects, feasibility studies and marketing. The types of end uses supported are varied, MAFF guide-lines stating that they should be: "farm-based but non- agricultural." (1987b p1). Since January 1991 capital grants for tourist accommodation under the scheme have been discontinued due to low rates of return (MAFF 1991). Qualification for grant depends on the applicant: deriving more than half of their income from agriculture; spending at least 1100 hours/year working in



agriculture; and having worked in farming for five years (MAFF 1987b p3). In other words part-time and hobby farmers are excluded.

Growing environmental pressure led MAFF to replace its 'Agricultural Improvement Scheme' (AIS) (19) with the 'Farm and Conservation Grant Scheme'(FCGS) (20), in 1989. The new emphasis switched grants from a concentration on production and intensification, towards a more conservation orientated approach. For example the FCGS introduced a 35% grant for the "Repair or reinstatement of traditional buildings" where no incentive previously existed (MAFF 1989b p32). The advent of the FCGS represented a fundamental shift to a more conservation orientated approach by MAFF.

Finally, there have been several local initiatives loosely based around the ESA idea. The 'North York Moors Farm Scheme' and Yorkshire Dales 'Barns and Walls Conservation Scheme' are examples. Both these schemes are based around the idea of whole farm voluntary management agreements (North York Moors National Park 1988 p1, Yorkshire Dales National Park 1990a+b). They include provision for the conservation of TFBs, by providing grants for repairs and reinstatement of buildings.

The response to recession and the need to reform the CAP has seen an increased emphasis on diversification and conservation in farm policy. Coupled with non-farm changes, such as rural in- migration, there are important implications for TFBs, a resource which is outlined in chapter 5.

## Notes to Chapter Four

### 1. Feudal System

The Longman Dictionary defines feudalism as; "the system by which people held land, and received protection, in return for giving work". In other words peasants were direct labourers for the estates, with the amount of freedom varying from cash tenancies to virtual slavery, depending on status (Whitlock 1983).

### 2. Yeoman Farmer

In modern terms these are the owner occupied, medium sized farms which still form the backbone of British agriculture.

### 3. The Period of Rebuilding

A period of reconstruction and growth (16th-17th centuries) followed decline of the Black Death, however the impact on farm buildings is questionable. According to Harvey, farm building styles and materials were slow to change during this period, traditional building continued much as normal; "Neither is there any specific evidence that farm buildings shared in the 'Great Rebuilding' which so improved domestic standards in the countryside" (1970 p60).

### 4. Enclosure

Enclosure was the process of dividing up previously 'open' land into smaller units by fencing, hedging and ditching. The process was often accompanied by a switch from arable to grazing land and an increase in individual cultivation (Cantor 1987, Coppock 1973a, Darby, Emery, Yelling 1973, Hoskins 1970).

### 5. Open Land

Open land was widespread through-out most of lowland Britain in the Middle Ages and into the modern era, the principle farming method being the 'the open field system', which often involved the communal farming of three large fields, each peasant farming individual strips within the fields (Cantor 1987). Usually, one field was under fallow, another under winter-sown grain and the third field was spring-sown grain (Emery 1973). On the poorer land of the north and west, an 'infield-outfield' system operated, involving an intensively farmed 'infield' and a less intensively farmed 'outfield' (Cantor 1987).

### 6. Incomers

This is a widely used term to describe people who migrate into rural areas. Where it occurs in significant numbers it can result in changes to the structure of rural communities. The term generally implies urban attitudes demonstrating some form of cultural, economic and social divergence with existing residents. The effects of 'incomers' may be visible, as a result of new investment. Equally changes can be invisible, mainly through changes to societal structures.

### 7. Cheap Food Imports

The repeal of the protectionist Corn Laws in 1846, opened the way for food imports. As the domestic food market was exposed to the rigours of international trade. Technological changes were also important as improved transportation and techniques such as refrigeration, facilitated food imports (Tracy 1989, Whitlock 1983).

## 8. Laissez-Faire Policies

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries successive governments based their policies on free trade. The world market was allowed to prevail for almost all agricultural produce. The benefit was; "cheap food produced at a lower cost and therefore at a lower price than the age-old fields of England could match." (Whitlock 1983 p187).

## 9. Deficiency Payments

Deficiency payments make up the shortfall between the market price and the guaranteed price, as agreed at periodic price reviews between the government and farming interests.

## 10. Buffer Stock Policy

Buffer stock policies attempt to even out price fluctuations, by purchasing surpluses in order to maintain prices at the guarantee level, while during periods of higher prices the stored food is sold back into the market. In the context of the EEC, persistent surpluses have resulted in food being disposed of cheaply outside the community.

## 11. Agri-Business

The term agri-business applies to modern, capital intensive agriculture, where the traditional roles of stewardship and paternalism are replaced by a business orientated approach. Such farms are often operated by large companies, backed by considerable resources.

## 12. Mansholt Plan

This was a 1968 Commission memorandum on the reform of agriculture, which sought to give greater emphasis to structural reform with a view to eventual reduction in market intervention.

## 13. Less Favoured Areas

Less Favoured Areas (LFA) were established under the EC directive 75/268, the aim being to; "sustain agriculture in difficult regions by providing compensation so that: depopulation can be arrested, rural communities preserved and countryside conserved." (MAFF 1982 p1). Financial assistance is available to farmers for investment and, as a headage payment, the 'Hill Livestock Compensatory Allowance' (HLCA) (MacEwan and Sinclair 1982). At present 53% of the land area of Britain is covered by the LFA designation, including most upland areas (Blunden and Curry 1988).

## 14. Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Article 19 of EC Structure Regulation (797/85) authorised member states to establish; "special national schemes in environmentally sensitive areas." (MAFF 1989a p47). Section 18 of the 1986 'Agriculture Act' embodied ESA's in British law, with the first 5 being designated in 1987. The scheme is administered by the Ministry on Agriculture, with rigid guide-lines being applied to farming practices to suit the particular area. For example, in the Pennine Dales ESA haycutting must not occur before 1st of July. The ESA's are voluntary but once in the scheme the guide-lines must be adhered to if payment is to be received.



### 15. Milk Quotas

The imposition of milk quotas 1984, under EC report COM(83)500, was a consequence of persistent surpluses in the milk sector. Penalties for over-production are a 'super-levy' (75% of the milk target price). The scheme is to continue at least until 1992 (Hollingham and Howarth 1989).

### 16. Set-Aside

EC Regulation 1094/88 introduced a scheme of voluntary Set-Aside. With participating farmers being required to withdraw a minimum of 20% of their land from production in return for annual compensation payments.

### 17. Farm Diversification Scheme

The Farm Diversification Scheme was introduced in 1988 with the aim of stimulating diversification of farming businesses into activities other than traditional farming. Capital grants are provided at 25% on expenditure between £35000 and £750. 50% grants are available for feasibility studies. While separate marketing grants are applied at a decreasing rate of 40%, 30% and 20% over the first three years. In January 1991 a decision was taken to discontinue grants for tourist accommodation due to low rates of return (MAFF 1987a, 1987b and 1991).

### 18. Countryside Premium Scheme

This scheme began in 1989 and offers top-up grants for Set-Aside land, provided that a range of environmental and social initiatives are implemented. The scheme is co-ordinated by the Countryside Commission, and has so far been restricted to the Eastern arable areas (although at the time of writing a more comprehensive scheme is being introduced called the Countryside Stewardship Scheme) (CC 1990).

### 19. Agricultural Improvement Scheme

Following EC regulation 797/85 the 'Agricultural Improvement Scheme' (AIS) became MAFF's principle source of capital grants for farm operations. The emphasis of the capital grants was very much on encouraging production (MAFF 1985b).

### 20. Farm and Conservation Grant Scheme

The 'Farm and Conservation Grant Scheme' replaced The AIS in 1989. Significantly the emphasis switched to conservation and social aims rather than production. For example one criterion of FCGS applications is that; "they do not conflict with the objectives of the ESA." (MAFF 1989b p13)

## **Chapter Five**

### **Traditional Farm Buildings: The Resource**

## 5.1 Introduction

This chapter considers 'the resource' of traditional farm buildings (TFBs) and addresses two fundamental questions - What is the nature of the resource? and Why are there buildings available for conservation and conversion? (i.e. redundancy). An understanding of the resource of TFBs is an essential precursor to a consideration of conservation and conversion.

## 5.2 Characteristics of Traditional Farm Buildings

TFBs are taken as those of vernacular style, the essential characteristics of which are materials, design and craftsmanship (Woodforde 1983).

The almost universal use of local building stone in the Pennines has given the buildings a strong regional character with some notable sub-regional variations, such as the red sandstone buildings of eastern Cumbria. By contrast modern, mass-produced, pre-fabricated buildings have little regional style.

TFBs demonstrate regional design features. Styles and traditions evolved and came to reflect local characteristics, with ideas being passed down through generations of craftsmen. Modern standardization has largely eliminated local design in new developments, although efforts are made by the Farm Buildings Association and through the notification procedures in National Parks to influence siting and design.

Craftsmanship is closely related to design traditions but is not identical. Wilkinson postulated that vernacular craftsmanship continued after the adoption of non-traditional designs (1987). The Dales Barns and Walls Conservation Scheme (chapter 7) has demonstrated the continued capacity of local builders to work in the local style.



### 5.3 The Vernacular and Polite Thresholds (Figure 5.1)

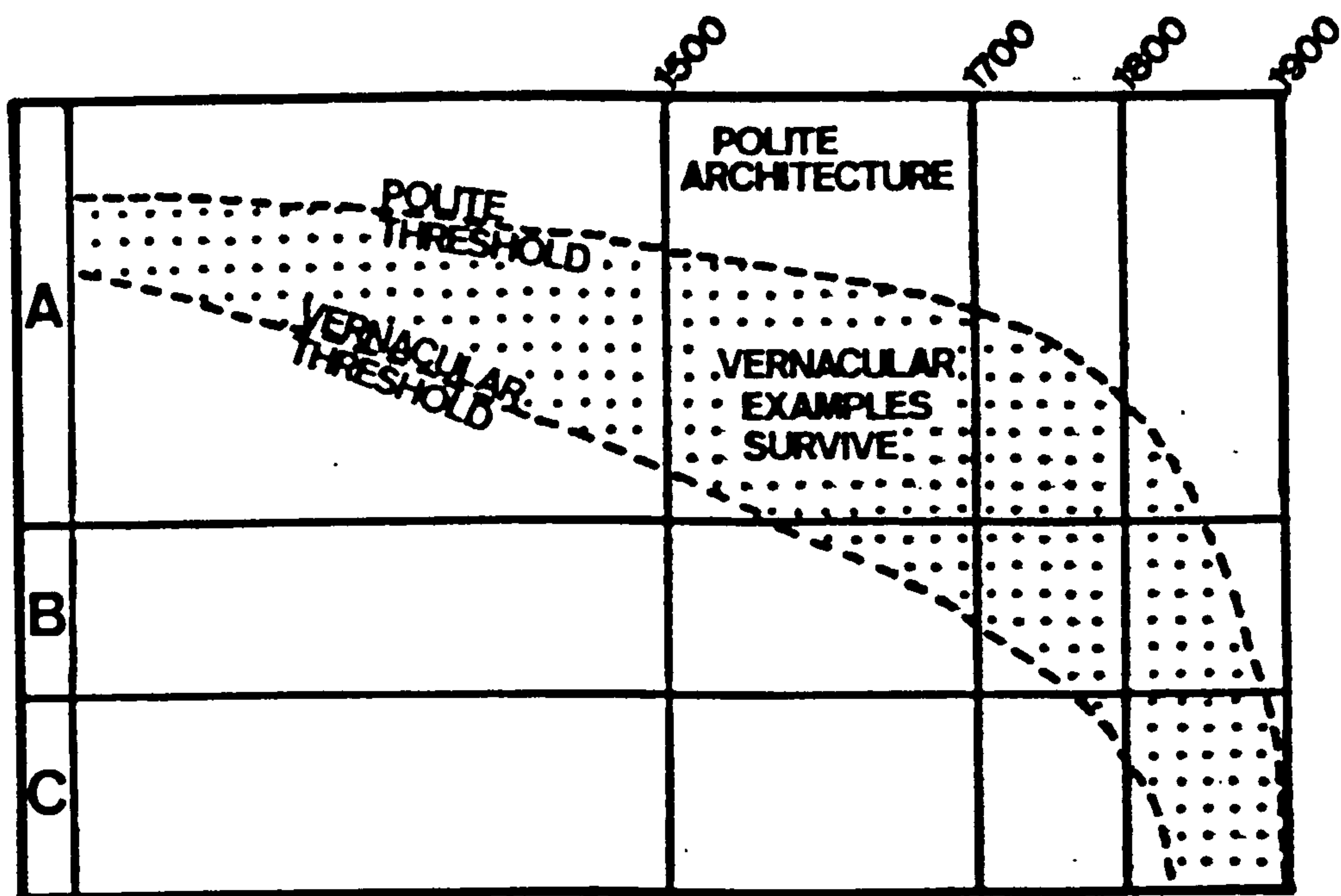
TFBs can also be classified in temporal terms. In this context, Brunskill defined a vernacular and polite threshold (1) (1978), the vernacular threshold being the date from which examples begin to survive. For residential buildings this was usually after the 'period of rebuilding', which Brunskill defined as being between 1670 and 1720 in the northern region. It is only from the 19th century onwards that a wide range of buildings survive. Before this date the use of non-durable materials and unsophisticated construction methods meant that the more lowly buildings had a limited life. For this reason most TFBs are no older than the 17th century (ibid).

The polite threshold marks the cessation of vernacular building, generally in the 19th century. Brunskill acknowledged that this sub-division was little more than a guideline. Some polite building did occur before the threshold and some vernacular buildings incorporate non-vernacular features.

Brunskill also identified a 'vernacular zone' marking the period; "between the emergence of houses in permanent materials but vernacular content, and the abandonment of vernacular design in favour of polite" (p28). This zone obviously varies regionally and according to building type.

In the Pennines, the widespread use of building stone coupled with the relatively slow pace of agricultural change has resulted in the widespread survival of buildings from before the 19th century. Some more prestigious buildings date back as far as the 16th century. The use of stone construction and the generally late emergence of polite architecture has resulted in a particularly strong vernacular tradition for many areas of

FIGURE 5.1 THE VERNACULAR THRESHOLD – TFB'S



- A. FEW TFB'S SURVIVE
- B. ONLY FARMHOUSES AND MORE PRESTIGIOUS  
NON-RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS SURVIVE
- C. FULL RANGE OF TFB'S SURVIVE

SOURCE: BRUNSKILL 1978:29

the Pennines and thus, in Brunskills terms, a long vernacular zone. The cessation of vernacular construction underlines the need to conserve the remaining TFBs.

## **5.4 The Nature of the Resource**

Fieldwork used in conjunction with secondary material enables the nature of 'the resource' to be outlined. A classification of TFBs was derived to assist this process (table 5.1). However, in using this classification it should be remembered that some structures are multifunctional.

### **5.4.1 Barns**

While often misused as an all encompassing term to describe a variety of farm buildings, this section confines itself to a consideration of barns in their true sense. According to Peters this is "a building for housing and threshing the corn and pulse crops" (1981 p10). While this may adequately describe their function in arable farming areas, in livestock farming areas such as the Pennines barns were mainly used for storing hay and straw.

The dominant external feature of many barns was the large double doors, which gave carts access to the barn. Smaller doors on the opposing walls created the through-draught necessary for the winnowing process. Other apertures in barns included ventilation and pitching holes (2) (Ibid.).

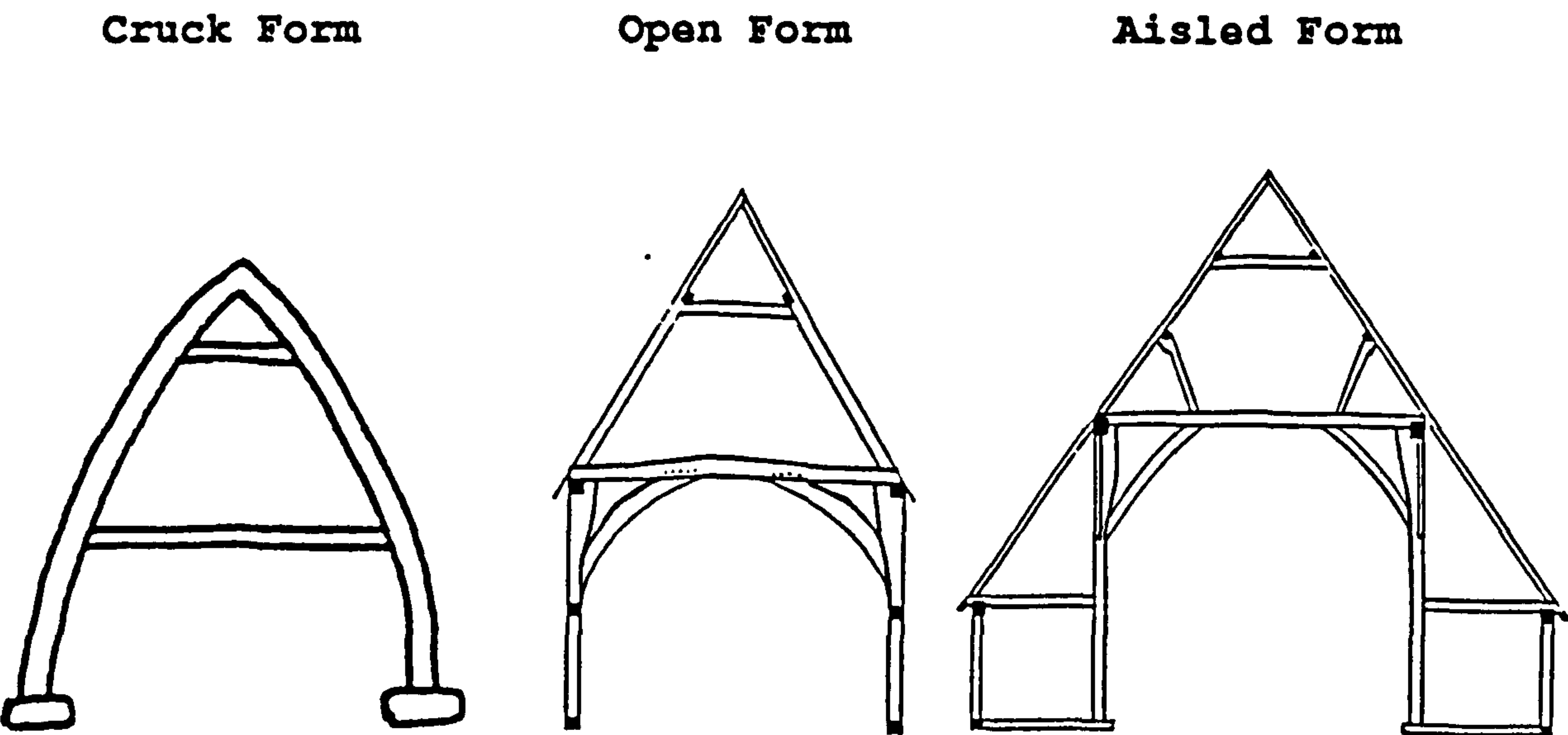
Internally, barn design centred around the threshing floor(s). Subdivision varied according to the method of timber construction used, the basic difference being between the 'cruck', 'open' and 'aisled' forms of barn (fig 5.2). Aisled barns (such as the Tithe barn at Bolton Abbey [SE 072 540]) have the advantage of allowing greater



Table 5.1 Classifications of Traditional Farm Buildings

Source			
Peters 1981	Harvey 1987	Lake 1989	Pennines
barn cartshed granary stable cowhouse dovecote piggery hopkiln	barn cartshed granary stable cowhouse dovecote piggery dairy oasthouse	barn cartshed granary stable cowhouse dovecote piggery sheephouse dairy	barn bank barn field barn cowhouse granary cartshed stable composite type

Figure 5.2 Basic Internal Form of Barns



Source: Essex County Council, 1979 p14-15

width. On the other hand the division of floor space can disrupt farming activity. It certainly has implications for conversion. (Darley 1988, Lake 1989 Peters 1981).

Modifications to the basic barn structure include the circular 'Gin Gangs' used for horse driven threshing machines, in areas such as Northumberland. The advent of steam power in the 19th century led to the addition of chimneys and boiler houses to the basic barn design, a legacy which still survives in areas like Northumberland. At Chollerton in Northumberland (NY 934 721) a windmill bears witness to another form of power (Harvey 1987 and Peters 1981).

Bank Barns and Field Barns are specialist features common to areas of the Pennines, and as such they warrant special consideration.

#### **5.4.2 Bank Barns**

Brunskill described a Bank Barn as a:

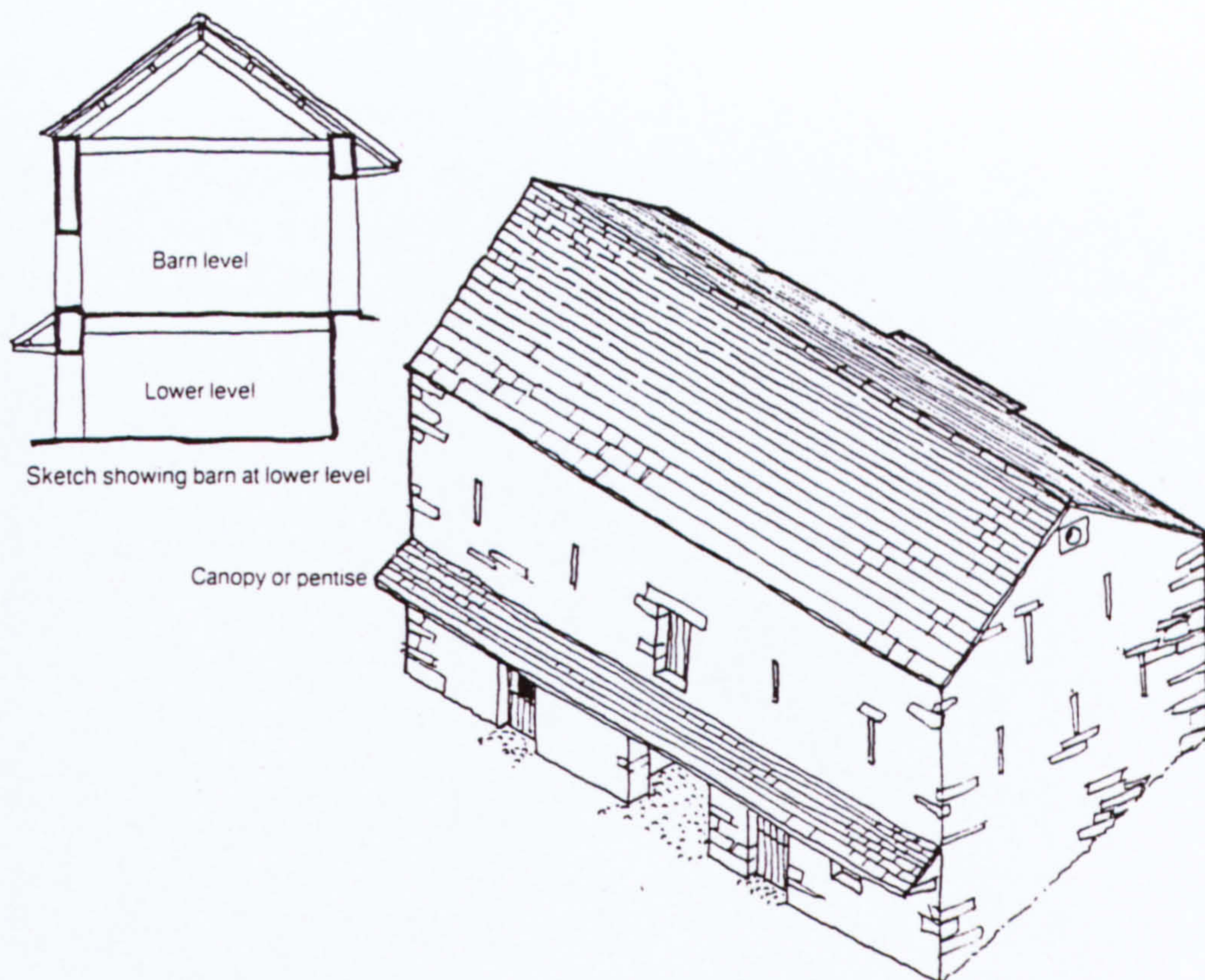
"simple rectangular gabled structure on two levels, the upper level being a conventional threshing barn and the lower level comprising a series of spaces as, for instance, cow-house, stable, cartshed and loose box."(3) (1982 p113).

These are combination buildings, common in hill areas of the Lake District and Pennine Cumbria (Brunskill 1974 and 1982). The design utilises the natural contours to allow access to the upper floor via ramps and pitching holes (Woodforde 1983) (fig 5.3). Most bank barns are situated along slopes, although Brunskill cites some examples of barns at right angles to the slope (1982).



**Figure 5.3**

**Bank Barn Design**



**Source: Brunskill 1982 p112**

**Plate 5.1 Standard Gabled Field Barn in Swaledale (Dales)**





An indication of the value of this form of construction was provided by Brunskill who considered that "the bank barn is surely pre-eminent for its compactness, its economy, and, very often, its rugged beauty." (1982 p113).

### 5.4.3 Field Barns

As isolated farm buildings, field barns form an important, and in some cases, fundamental, element of the landscape (see later chapters). They originated due to a combination of enclosure, farm amalgamation, and partible inheritance (4), the objective being to disperse farm activities into the fields, thereby saving on labour, transport and capital (Brunskill 1982, Reynolds 1985). Externally, field barns usually have a simple rectangular form, although section 5.6.2 demonstrates the wide diversity which exists. Like other barns they have ventilation and pitching holes, but they usually lack the large double doors seen in threshing barns (Lake 1989, Peters 1981) (plate 5.1).

Internally the barns were 2 storey buildings, with hay kept above and cattle below. They operated as a self-contained system, hay from the surrounding fields being used to feed the cattle during the winter. In return the stock provided manure for the pasture. Most field barns are situated on or close to field boundaries, so they were able to serve several fields, but this does mean that they often have poor access. This has obvious implications for current thinking on their conservation and conversion. The remote, dispersed nature of field barns means that they are largely redundant for modern farming with its emphasis on centralised operations. Despite this, there is a considerable legacy of field barns in areas such as the Dales and Peak (5.6.2). Where they form part of cherished National Park landscapes.

Although most barns in the Pennines are relatively modest structures, there are some of outstanding historic and architectural interest, an example being the cruck barn (5) at Drebley in the Dales (SE 053 591) (plate 7.3).

#### **5.4.4 Cowhouses**

According to Lake (1989) these buildings did not become popular until the 19th century, due to problems of disease and ignorance of the value of shelter (Peters 1981). External features of cowhouses included ventilation slits and mucking out holes. They tended to be single storey with low ceilings. Timber partitions separated the cattle, although some had loose boxes. Feeding and waste passages were installed at either end of the stalls, alongwith hay racks and drinking troughs. The precise arrangements of these features varied according to design (Peters 1981). The development of commercial dairying has led to the construction of specialist units leaving many cowhouses redundant (Harvey 1987). In a similar fashion, improved transportation led to the centralisation of the liquid milk trade, rendering many farmhouse dairies redundant or reducing their role (Harvey 1987, Lake 1989). This trend was reinforced by stringent health regulations which militated against the use of traditional buildings.

#### **5.4.5 Granary/ Cartshed**

Often occurring in combination, the usual arrangement was for cartsheds to be constructed with granaries on the upper storey. This gave the advantage of good circulation of air and reduced vermin problems (Peters 1981). Sometimes granaries were situated over other buildings, such as the stable. Granaries were also constructed as buildings in their own right, although no examples were found in the Pennines. The main distinguishing feature of such granaries were the staddle stones (6) which raised

the buildings above ground level, reducing damp and vermin problems (Harvey 1987, Lake 1989 and Peters 1981).

#### **5.4.6 Stable**

The great importance afforded to horses as beasts of burden meant that stable accommodation tended to be of a higher standard than other similar buildings. The ceilings were higher and the better lighting created a more "domestic" appearance (Woodforde 1983 p74). The internal layout was similar to cowhouses with both stalls and loose boxes. Stables were classic examples of technological redundancy, since their function diminished as tractors were introduced.

#### **5.4.7 Other**

Some other types of TFBs, such as dovecotes, pigstys and oasthouses were of marginal importance in the survey region. However one type of building of particular local significance was the Bastle house. These defensive buildings were originally built to combat Scottish raids and incorporated sheltered accommodation for the family on the upper floor with the stock kept below. Most bastles date from between the mid 16th and mid 17th centuries (Peters 1981, Royal Commission on Historical Monuments 1970). Few unaltered bastles are still in farm use, but many have been incorporated into working buildings such as 'The Monk' farmhouse in the North Pennines (NY 784 565) (Plate 5.2). Although such buildings are of limited functional use to modern agriculture they do add an important historical dimension to TFBs.

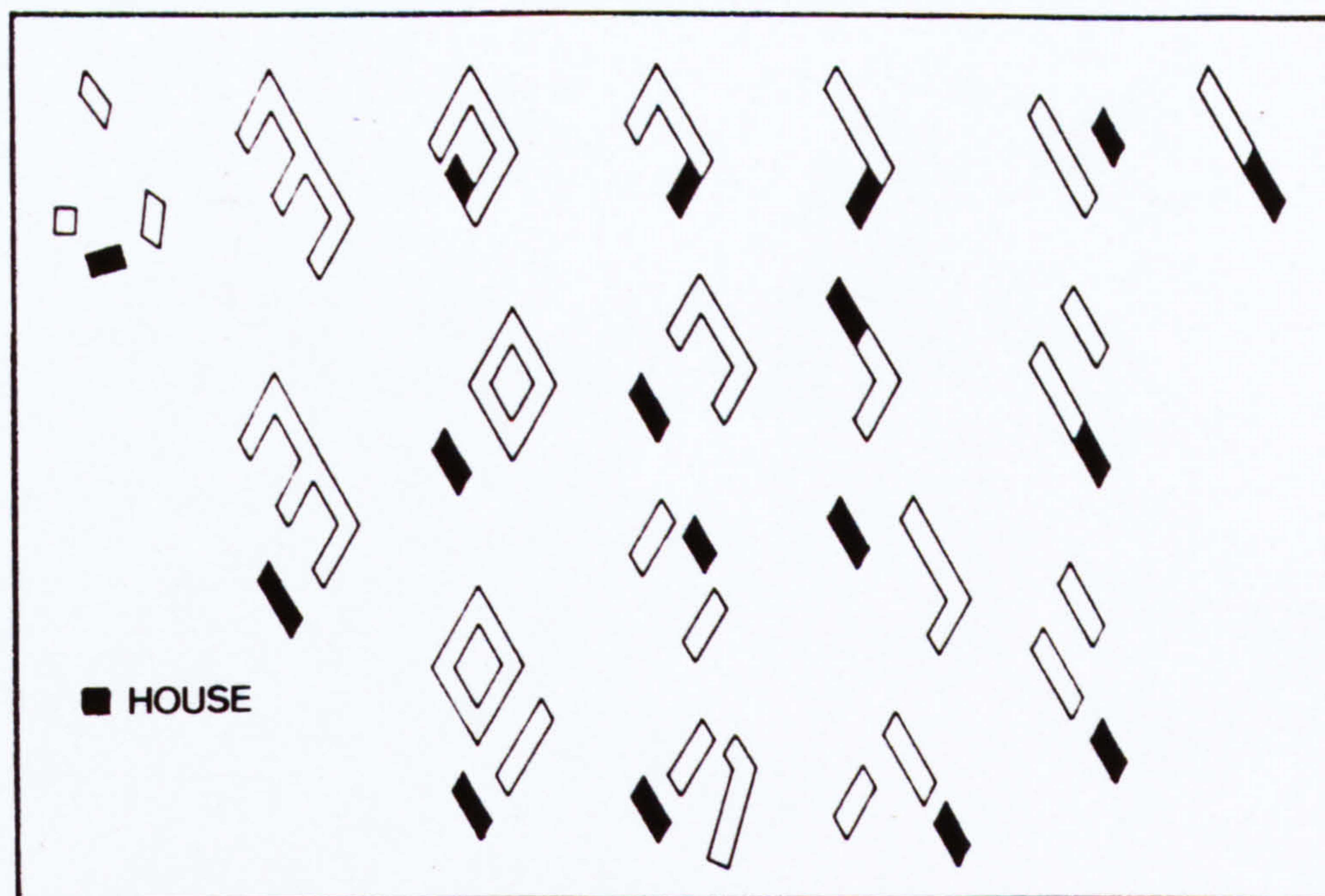


Plate 5.2 Bastle Incorporated into a Working Farm Building  
at the 'Monk', North Pennines (NY 784 565). The  
Arched Doorway is Clearly Visible



Figure 5.4

Common Farmstead Layouts



Source: Peters 1981 p6



### 5.4.8 Composite Designs

Many of the TFBs described have been incorporated into multifunctional farmstead complexes of varying design.

The longhouse was the most ancient of all designs, with a history reaching back 6000 years. Its simplest manifestation was the byre dwelling: "where people and animals shared the same entrance and lived at opposite ends of the same building" (Lake 1989 p74). Although very few such structures survive today they do form the precursor to more recent 'longhouse style' buildings, many examples of which are found in the Pennines. Lake notes that;

"The tradition.... is reflected in the multitude of linear farmsteads, where farm buildings are attached to but separate from farmhouses, in the north and west of Britain," (1989 p78).

Although having the longhouse morphology, these buildings differed in being 2 storey and having no cross-passage, In other words the animals and family shared the same gable but had no direct interconnection (Lake 1989, Penoyre 1978, Peters 1981). Some Pennine longhouses have developed cumulatively with other buildings being added, such as stables and workshops. The result has produced buildings of some considerable length (Peters 1981).

Laithehouses were a common feature of the South Pennines. The usual design was 2 storey with barns and cowhouses attached, but not connected to, the farmhouse. The large cart entrance to the barns was the main distinguishing feature of the laithehouse. These buildings were well suited to upland areas where quantities of grain were limited (Lake 1989).

Various other farm layouts have evolved in response to structural, technological and cropping changes. Peters outlined some of the most common layouts (Fig 5.4). The spatial aspect was demonstrated in field evidence with the large planned farmsteads of some large estates contrasting with smaller developments elsewhere (Robinson 1983). In reality, development was more often piecemeal rather than being to a master plan and the courtyard style was open to numerous variations.

## 5.5 Non Vernacular Buildings

Not all old farm buildings are vernacular. Prosperity tends to give rise to more imposing architecture and this can be traced as far back as 1700. Two main reasons can be identified for this development. Firstly there was the period of agricultural improvement when farm buildings had to change to accommodate new methods and machinery. Secondly there was the emergence, or re- emergence, of large rural estates which had the resources and motivation to invest in elaborate farmstead designs. Robinson summed up the situation in the 18th century:

"In the 18th century British agriculture became the most progressive and productive in the world. The architectural expression of this great burst of development was the model farm architecture created on their estates by improving landowners." (1983 p4).

Such building continued through-out most of the 18th and 19th centuries. It even extended into the recession of the later 1800's, an indication of the role of the large estates in overcoming economic constraints on development. In terms of design and materials model farms were often quite radical, with courtyard designs and ornate features being common. For instance Robinson outlined attempts to establish the French material 'pise' (7) in Britain (Brigden 1986, Robinson 1983). The Victorian period saw adaptation to incorporate steam power onto the farm. After 1870 the



recession reduced the amount of new building but the tradition of stewardship and paternalism ensured adequate maintenance of most estate properties (Brigden 1986).

## 5.6 The Resource: An Evaluation

Having outlined the form and function of the resource, it is important to consider the scale and types of buildings that are available for conservation and conversion. The analysis draws on data for the whole survey region but concentrates on certain specific areas.

Figure 5.5 indicates the size and nature of the resource in the Pennines. Between them 50 respondents had 62 redundant TFBs of various types, while 68 buildings were seen as having potential for conversion. If the sample size is taken as representing 3% of the total number of farms in the Pennines (Appendix I) then there could be around 2200 TFBs with conversion potential, and 2000 buildings which were actually redundant and had conversion potential. These figures may only represent 86% of the total if the under representation of Yellow Pages were to be considered (Appendix I). The total number of TFBs in the Pennines may be around 8800 (using Hill's calculation of 2.46 TFBs per upland farm [1985 p9]). Thus around 25% of Pennine TFBs are perceived as having potential for conservation and conversion.

Traditional barns and cowsheds/ dairy were the most numerous, indicating the impact of structural and technological changes on agriculture. Intra-regional variation was also important. For example 58% of the redundant traditional barns were located in the Dales, reflecting the specialist farming system practised in that area (5.4.3).

The survey of farmers sought opinion on whether the buildings in question had a potential for conversion. Not surprisingly the returns closely mirrored those for the



FIGURE 5.5

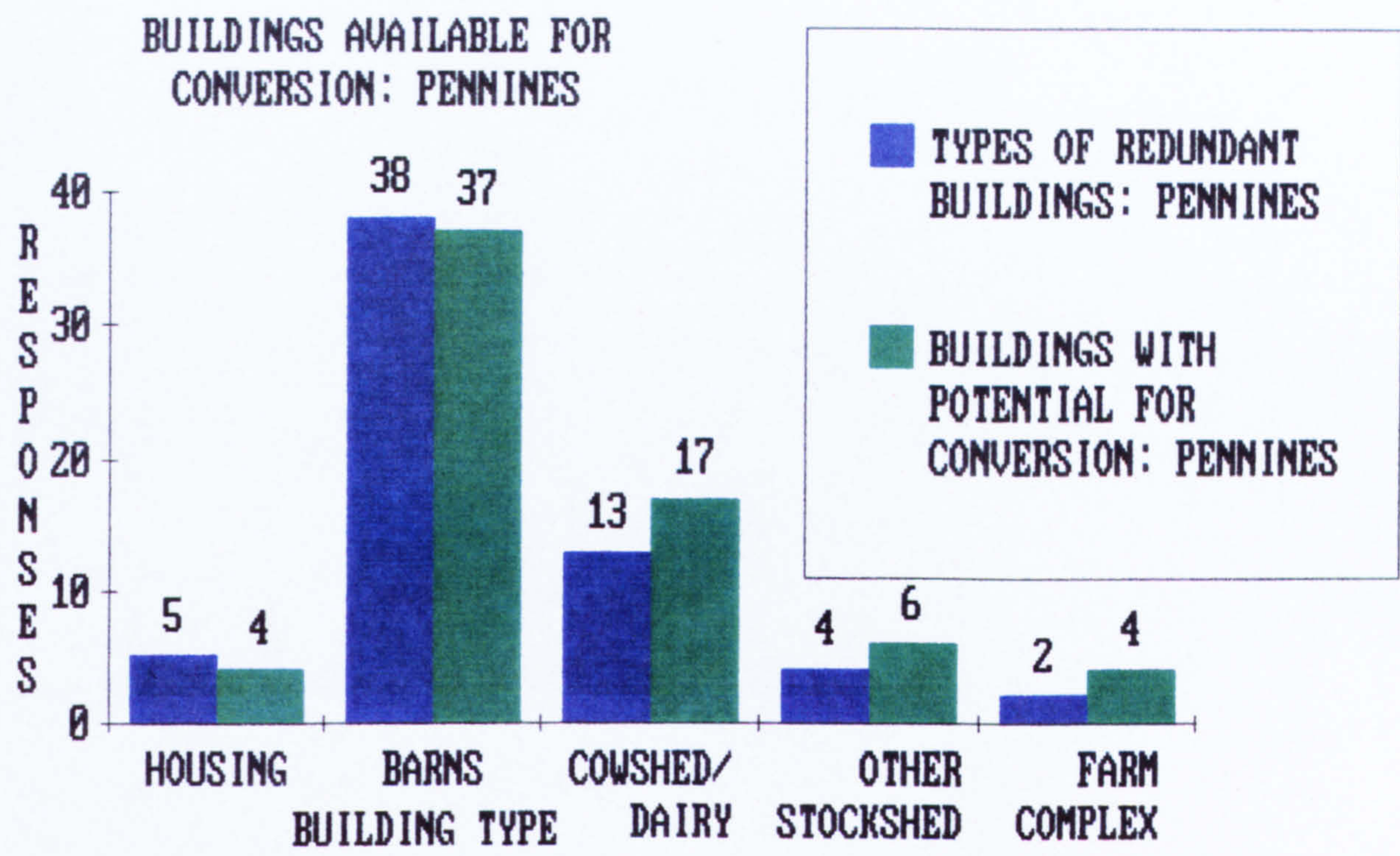


Table 5.2 Relationship Between Redundant Buildings and Those Seen to have Conversion Potential

		Do you have TFBS with potential for conversion?	
		no	yes
Do you have redundant farm buildings?	no	31	25
	yes	3	36



redundant buildings (Fig 5.5). Traditional barns constituted the bulk of buildings regarded as having potential for conversion. This similarity belies the commonly held view that farmers are unwilling to admit that buildings are redundant. This is backed up by cross-tabulation which shows that the majority of farmers with old farm buildings for conversion also admitted to redundancy (Table 5.2). The data require careful interpretation because of the different scale of opportunities offered. It is self evident that farm complexes and houses are likely to incorporate more potential units, and offer greater opportunities for conversion than are traditional barns. For example a proposed farm complex development at Chollerton (NZ 933 721) in Northumberland involved 8 residential units and was clearly more significant in scale than an individual barn conversion.

### 5.6.1 Regionality in the Resource

Looking at traditional barns alone, figures 5.6 and 5.7 demonstrate strong intra-regional and functional variations. Traditional barns in the Dales accounted for 32% of all redundant buildings. This could simply reflect the degree of area coverage and response in the survey, in which the Dales area had the highest representation. For this reason both figures 5.6 and 5.7 include adjusted data, obtained by dividing the area responses by the area percentages of the usable returns (tables 5.3 and 5.4).

Adjusted figures reduce the relative importance for the Dales, but the area still emerges as the most significant, accounting for 31% of responses. The next closest response was 19% for the North and South Pennines. Thus even allowing for some of the shortcomings in survey coverage, it can be concluded that local variations in farming systems are influential in determining the resource of TFBs. The field barn system of the Yorkshire Dales is of particular importance in this context.



FIGURE 5.6

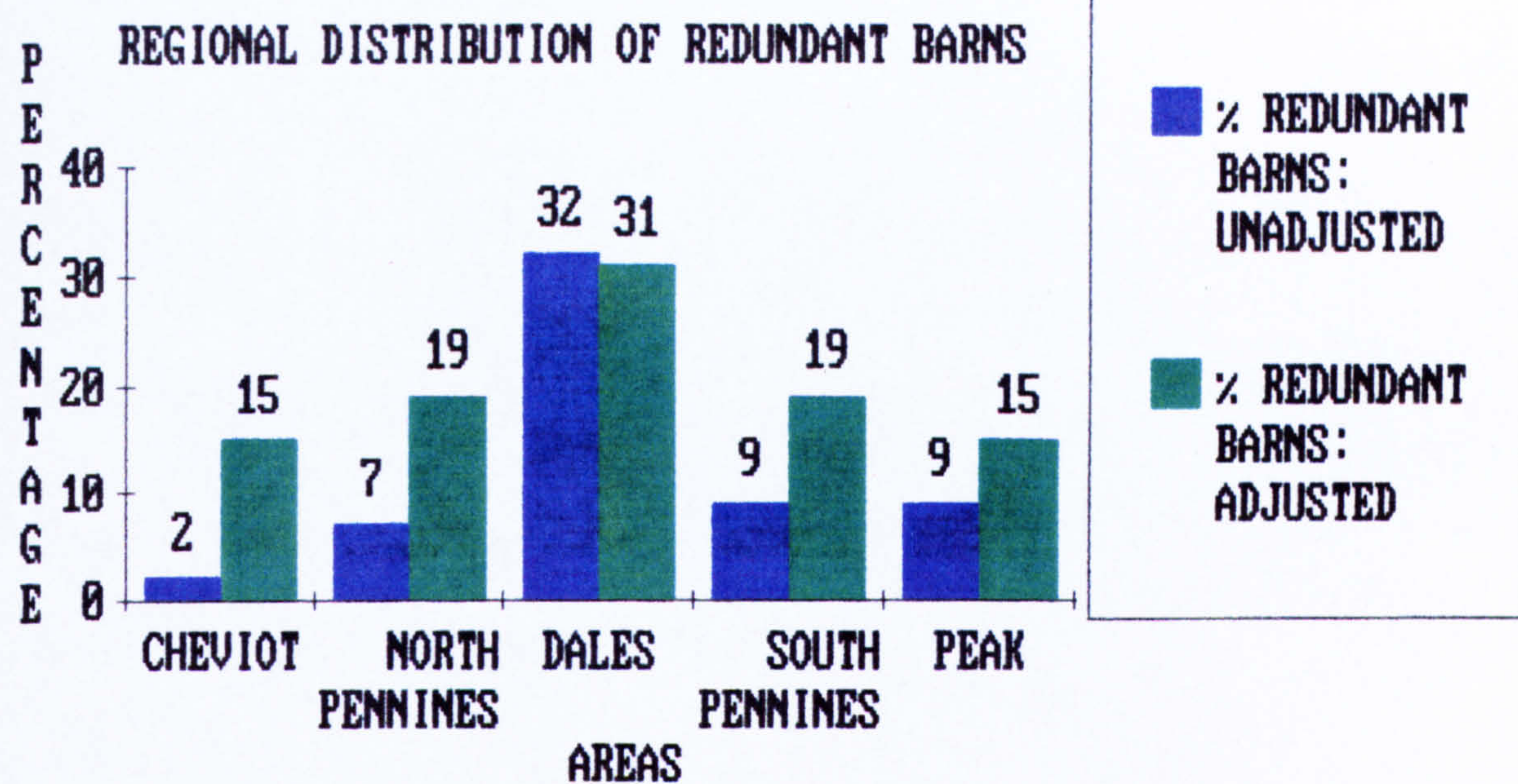




FIGURE 5.7

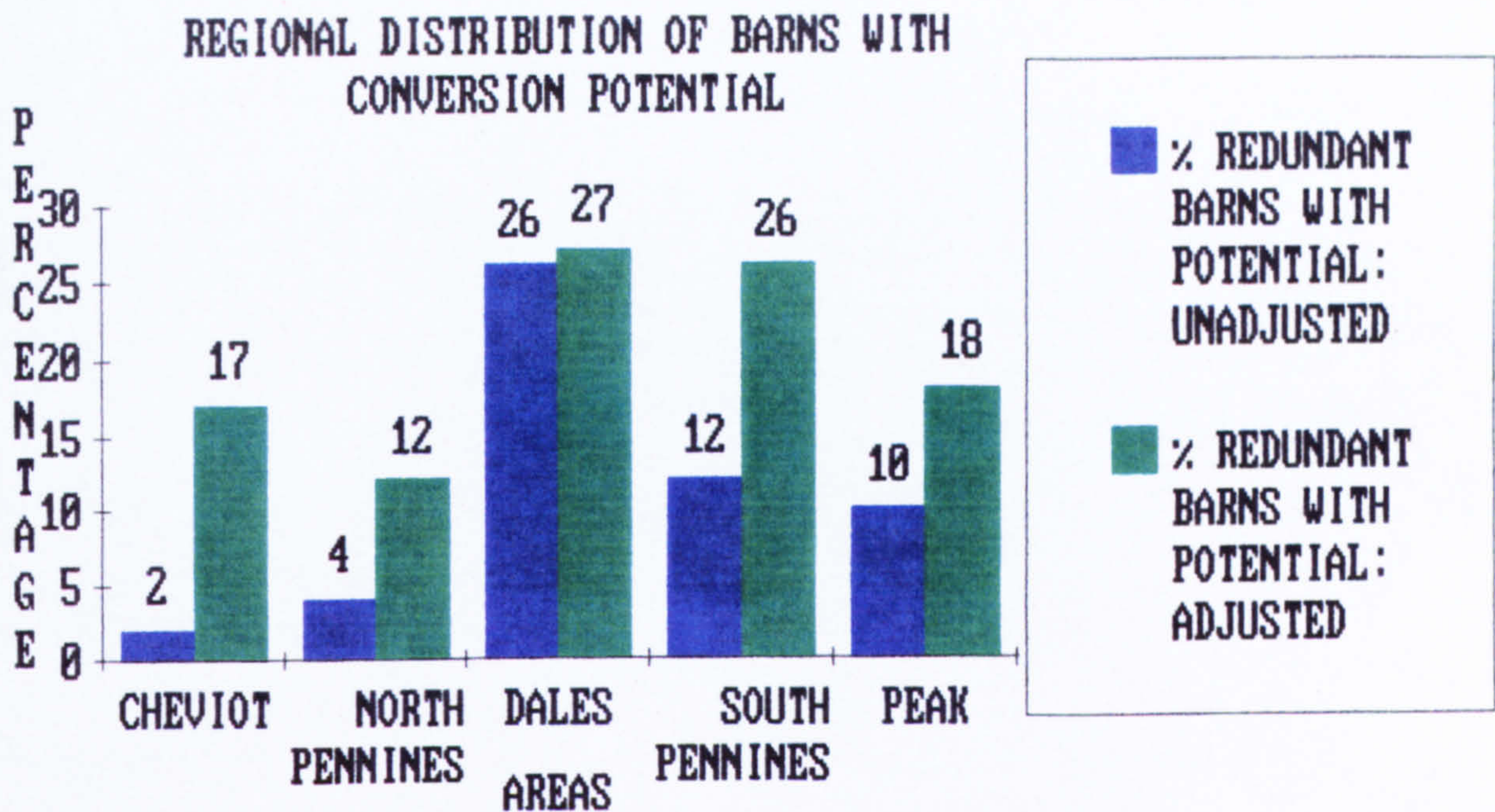


Table 5.3 Regional Distribution of Redundant Barns

Area	% of all redundant buildings (A)	% of the usable return (B)	A/B	Adjusted Figures
Cheviot	2	5	2/5	= 0.4 (15%)
North Pennines	7	13	7/13	= 0.5 (19%)
Dales	32	39	32/39	= 0.8 (31%)
South Pennines	9	19	9/19	= 0.5 (19%)
Peak	9	23	9/23	= 0.4 (15%)

Table 5.4 Regional Distribution of Barns with Conversion Potential

Area	% of all buildings with potential (A)	% of the usable return (B)	A/B	Adjusted Figures
Cheviot	2	5	2/5	= 0.4 (17%)
North Pennines	4	13	4/13	= 0.3 (12%)
Dales	26	39	26/39	= 0.65 (27%)
South Pennines	12	19	12/19	= 0.63 (26%)
Peak	10	23	10/23	= 0.44 (18%)



Figure 5.7 shows one anomaly, with the adjusted figure for the South Pennines having a very high number of buildings with potential for conversion. An explanation could be the close proximity to the West Yorkshire and Manchester conurbations. It could be expected that this would generate a high demand for conversion and, as a consequence, raise farmers level of awareness of the possibilities. This was confirmed by survey data which showed that 43% of South Pennine farmers actively mentioned conversion without direct prompting. Comparative figures for the Dales and Peak were 34% and 27% respectively.

### **5.6.2 A Case Study: Wensleydale (Table 5.5)**

Detailed surveys of TFBs were conducted in the South Tyne Valley of the North Pennines, and in the Wensleydale sector of the Dales. Findings from the latter are presented in this section and illustrated in Table 5.5. This in depth example cannot be viewed as representative of the whole Pennines region but it does give a flavour of the kind of resource that exists and provides a pointer to the types of issues likely to arise during development.

In Wensleydale a transect was taken between Sedbusk (SD 884 912) and Simon Stone (SD 873 916). A total of 16 separate barns were identified over a distance of 1 kilometre. A similar survey in the South Tyne valley found only 8 buildings in 6 kilometres, giving an indication of the more concentrated scale of 'the resource' in the Dales, although the number of potential units per building was much higher in other areas.



Table 5.5      Barns Survey in Wensleydale

Barn	Form	Doors	Windows	Site	Situation	Repair
1	B	2	2	B	A	A
2	----- Farmstead Complex -----					
3	C	3	2	B	A	B
4	B	-	0	A	B	C
5	A	2	0	B	A	B
6	B	-	-	A	B	C
7	B	1	-	B	A	A
8	A	1	0	C	A	A
9	C	3	0	A	A	A
10	C	3	0	A	B	A
11	B	-	-	B	B	C
12	A	2	2	B	A	A
13	C	2	2	A	A	A
14	B	1	0	A	A	A
15	B	2	1	B	A	A
16	A	1	-	-	A	A

Form:

- A. Lean-to
- B. Standard gable
- C. Standard gable and lean-to

Site:

- A. Field corner
- B. Field boundary
- C. Middle of field

Situation:

- A. > 250 km from road
- B. < 250 km from road

State of Repair (repair):

- A. Good
- B. Moderate
- C. Poor/ruin

- data missing as access was not gained

X  
X?

The transect demonstrated major variations on the 'standard' form of barn (simple rectangular gabled structure). It contained 8 'standard' barns, 4 lean-to style barns and 4 standard barns with lean-to's. Plate 5.3 demonstrates one of the lean-to barns, the differing stone work of the outshut (8) indicating that it was a more recent addition.

The mean number of doors was 1.85 per barn, with a maximum of 3 and a minimum of 1. They were mostly small single doors, often located on the south side of the building. In two cases there were larger double doors, which could well represent an attempt to adapt barns to modern usage (Plate 5.4). The barn illustrated had been adapted to modern usage, but only at some cost to its conservation value. The transect showed an average of 0.7 windows per barn and 0.4 pitching holes. Thus large apertures were rare, which has obvious implications for the design of conversions, particularly to residential use.

Most barns (9 in total) were sited on field boundaries serving 2 fields, 5 barns were on field corners where they could serve upwards 3 or more fields. Only 1 barn in this survey was sited away from the field boundaries

The transect suggested a connection between the extent of dereliction and nearness to a road or settlement. Three barns were classified as in a 'bad state of repair/ ruin. All of these were remote barns above the 300m contour. By contrast the more accessible barns were in much better state of repair. Plate 5.5 shows such a barn in the vicinity of Simon Stone (SD 876 914) where both roof and walls had been repaired and renovated. Electricity had been installed and new wooden doors had been fitted. The evidence of this survey indicated the importance of vehicular access and the availability of services if barns are to be kept in agricultural use, or converted to non-



Plate 5.3 Lean-to Barn in Wensleydale (SD 8780 9148) (Barn 12)



Plate 5.4 Adapted Barn in Wensleydale (SD 8755 9138) (Barn 3)





Plate 5.5    Renovated Barn with Electricity Supply in  
Wensleydale (SD 879 913) (Barn 9)





farm uses. Most of the barns in the survey were in isolated locations, so the cost of laying on services could prove prohibitive, an issue elaborated in chapter 6.

## 5.7 Why is there Redundancy?

Earlier sections have looked at TFBs as a resource and some of the constraints on full utilisation. This section attempts to identify the reasons for redundancy, using evidence from both the Pennines survey and existing literature.

Six categories of redundancy were identified using field evidence and a similar survey by Wilkinson (1987):

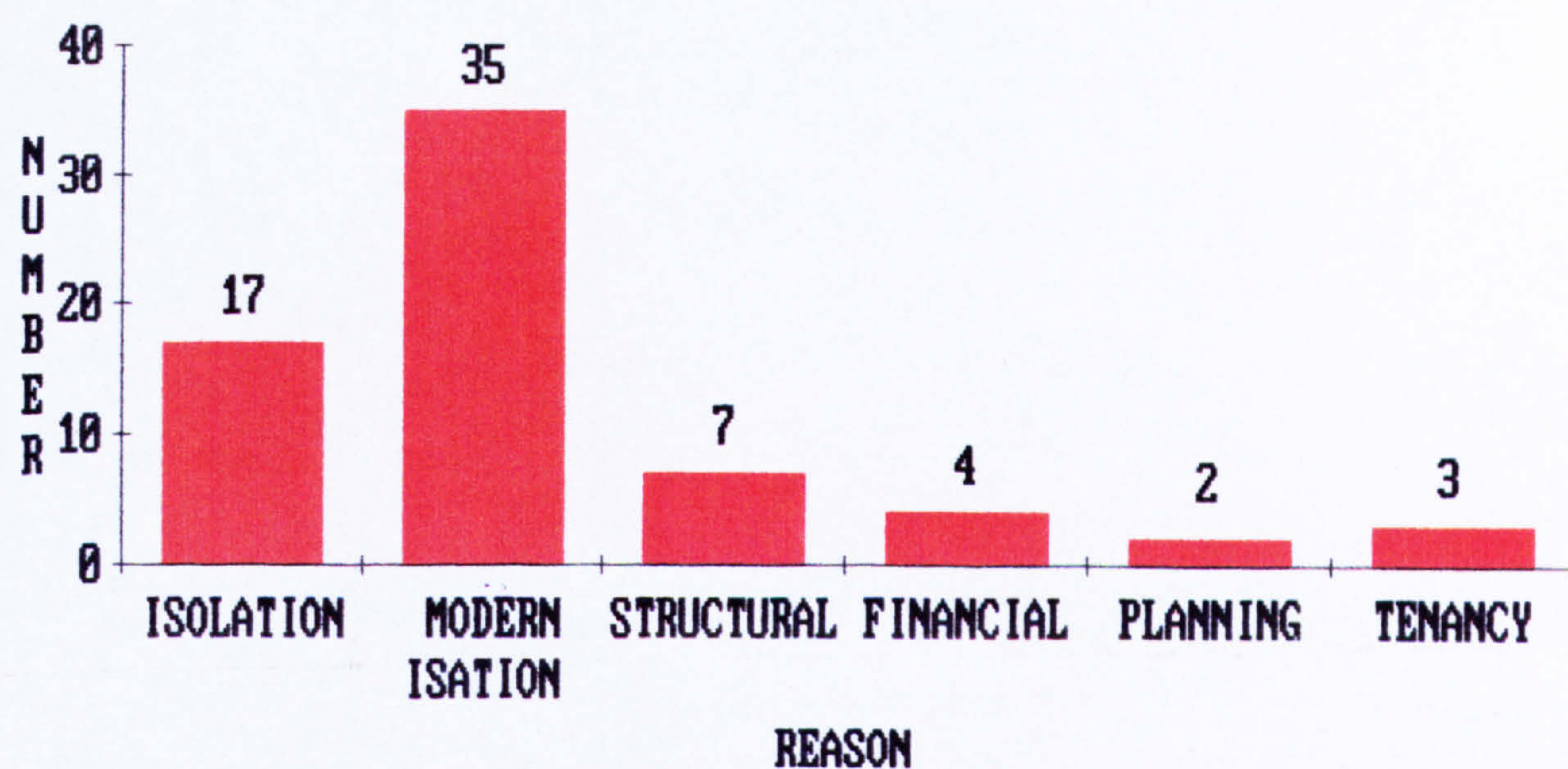
- modernisation (management and technical aspects)
- isolation
- structural (physical condition)
- financial
- planning
- tenancy.

In the Pennines 52% of farmers attributed redundancy to agricultural modernisation (Fig 5.8). In many cases new purpose-built buildings had superseded older structures. Changing farm practices were cited as reasons for redundancy, several farmers having given up dairy farming possibly as a result of the introduction of milk quotas in 1984. Other respondents mentioned a shift to arable production and beef as reasons for redundancy. Technological change also causes redundancy, for example tractors may be unable to use old buildings. Similarly, the development of silage making at the expense of hay requires new investment. Other reasons mentioned were the need to reduce labour costs, the lack of services and the cessation of farming activity.



FIGURE 5.8

## REASONS FOR REDUNDANCY IN THE PENNINES





Isolation was the second most common reason for redundancy accounting for 25% of responses. Logic would suggest that this problem is most common with outlying field barns. Not surprisingly this factor was particularly prominent in the Dales which accounted for 65% of Pennine farmers who saw isolation as a cause of redundancy. Thus the Dales building stock was designed for a system whose demands are almost exactly opposed to modern requirements, most respondents expressing the desire to centralize rather than disperse farming activity.

Structural problems were concentrated on the Dales, underlining the difficulty of maintaining the large and dispersed building stock of the area. This also suggests that the National Park Authority will struggle to achieve its barn conservation aims (chapter 7). Planning, finance and tenancy were only listed as marginal reasons for redundancy in the Pennines.

In conclusion, redundancy is a practical issue with a variety of causes. However, evidence suggests that a good deal of ambiguity surrounds the subject. Some respondents seemed unsure as to the existence of redundant buildings. For instance one farmer when asked if he had redundant TFBs replied; "Yes and no, all of the buildings are in fact being used, however purpose built buildings would of course be far better". In other words objective criteria and analysis go so far but there is an inevitable element of subjectivity reflecting the circumstances and perceptions of individual farmers.

Most respondents seemed happy to admit that buildings were redundant. The variations in response suggest that redundancy was a state of mind, with some farmers making conscious efforts to adapt buildings to new agricultural uses while others seemed only too willing to condemn them in the interests of progress. In this context

one Dales farmer said "Only 100% grant aid will encourage me to maintain unneeded barns in the Dales National Park".

Equally, another Dales farmer was willing to go out of his way to integrate TFBs into modern agriculture:

"I ... intend to make the best use of traditional buildings, but within agriculture, e.g. I hope to repair one old barn and make it into a modern mill and mix house".

It seems that redundancy is a perceptual issue as well as a practical consideration. On a practical basis few farms seem to have labour and capital available to invest in TFBs unless this was central to their requirements. However, evidence suggested that farmers did not always act as rational businessmen and that perceptions of value and redundancy might be equally important in determining the fate of TFBs.

## 5.8 Summary

This chapter has evaluated the physical resource of TFBs by addressing 3 major questions. Firstly, what are TFBs, secondly, the nature of the buildings, and thirdly, why is there redundancy? It is clear that there exists a considerable resource of TFBs in the Pennines, and consequently the options for conservation and conversion are great.

Research has revealed a number of related issues of considerable importance to conservation and conversion. Regionality in the resource, and the perceptions of the major 'players' are important issues. Indeed the attitudes of farmers and landowners seem to be of considerable importance, often overriding economic considerations.



Such issues are considered in later chapters, which consider the uses for the resource of TFBs.

## Notes to Chapter Five

### 1. Polite Architecture

Buildings purposely designed by professionals to national and international styles, aesthetic considerations being an important element of design (Brunskill 1978).

### 2. Pitching Hole

A hole situated in the side or gable of a barn. It was originally used to load hay into the barn when the doorway was too low to allow access for laden hay carts.

### 3. Loosebox

Peters describes a loosebox as a; "a room or pen in which the animal was free to move about." (Peters 1981 p71). The essential point was that the animals were untethered and unpened.

### 4. Partible Inheritance

The process of dividing land between the heirs during succession. Obviously through the generations land becomes divided into smaller and smaller plots.

### 5. Cruck Barn

The Dictionary of Architecture defines a cruck as; "Pairs of inclined timbers ... , usually curved in timber framing." (Fleming et. al. 1980 p86). The basic design for barns is ground to ridge timbers, although variations are possible on this standard form. The crucial point is that the timbers are directly load bearing, thus limiting the size of building possible. Cruck barns were common in the North and West of Britain before being superseded by other designs from the sixteenth century onwards (Raistrick 1976).

### 6. Staddle Stones

Mushroom shaped stones which were originally used to raise buildings above ground level. Used for granaries they helped to reduce problems of damp and vermin.

### 7. Pise

Pise was a mud like building material made by; "making a wooden frame and filling it with a mixture of fine loam rammed in firmly" (Robinson 1983 p52).

### 8. Outshut

Outshuts are; "projections .... from the main plan shape" (Brunskill 1978 p99). In the case of TFBs they generally take the form of lean-to type of constructions.



# **Chapter Six**

## **Conversion**

## 6.1 Introduction

Chapters 1 to 4 outlined the methodological and topical foundations to the study. This theme was continued into chapter 5 which outlined the resource of traditional farm buildings (TFB) in the Pennines. The remainder of the thesis applies this background information in a discussion of the processes of conversion and conversion, and the implications of these actions (the evaluation). In doing so the 'how' and 'what' questions are addressed.

There are close parallels between conservation and conversion indeed, the extent to which conversion constitutes a method of conservation is a topic for discussion in the conclusion. Despite the overlaps a distinction is made between conservation and conversion, the former being considered in chapter 7, while the latter is the subject of this chapter.

To recap, conversion is a change of use away from agricultural use. Three main categories can be identified; residential, tourist accommodation and business. As part of the evaluation process, this chapter considers the aims, reality and future of the conversion option. This entails the study of attitudinal, philosophical and practical aspects of conversion, the conclusions are illustrated by case study evidence from the Pennines.

The final part of the chapter considers the policy and practice of conversion: how reality relates to policy aims, what are the major difficulties, how they can be resolved and the likely future trends.



## 6.2 Incentives for Conversion

It is important to understand the various incentives and motives which lie behind the decision to convert, because these can dictate the nature of conversions which are carried out.

Pennine farmers saw the earning potential of conversions and reduced farm incomes as the most important incentives for conversions. Other reasons given included financial aid and demand for conversions. Interestingly the availability of technical aid scored low, indicating that few farmers saw the need for practical assistance in carrying out conversions (figure 6.1).

These incentives for conversion can be viewed in terms of both 'push' and 'pull' effects. The former included the financial problems facing many farmers which provided a major incentive to convert, although as later writing discusses, such problems may have a limited role in actually achieving conversion. Financial difficulties can prevent conversion. As one South Pennine farmer commented "those who need alternative business enterprises cannot afford to set them up to be immediately viable." This raises questions over the effect of the agricultural recession on conversion. Evidence suggests that it has increased awareness and interest but the extent to which this has been translated into positive action is questionable. Certainly few of the case studies described in section 6.5 had been developed in response to serious economic problems in the farm business.

Case studies suggested that family structures can be an important influence with the need to support a family being a major 'push' factor for conversion. The desire to increase or maintain incomes reflects the entrepreneurial instincts of many farmers who can usually adapt to slowly changing economic conditions. This financial themes underlies virtually all aspects of conversion, for without financial security farmers have few viable options.



FIGURE 6.1 INCENTIVES TO CONVERT

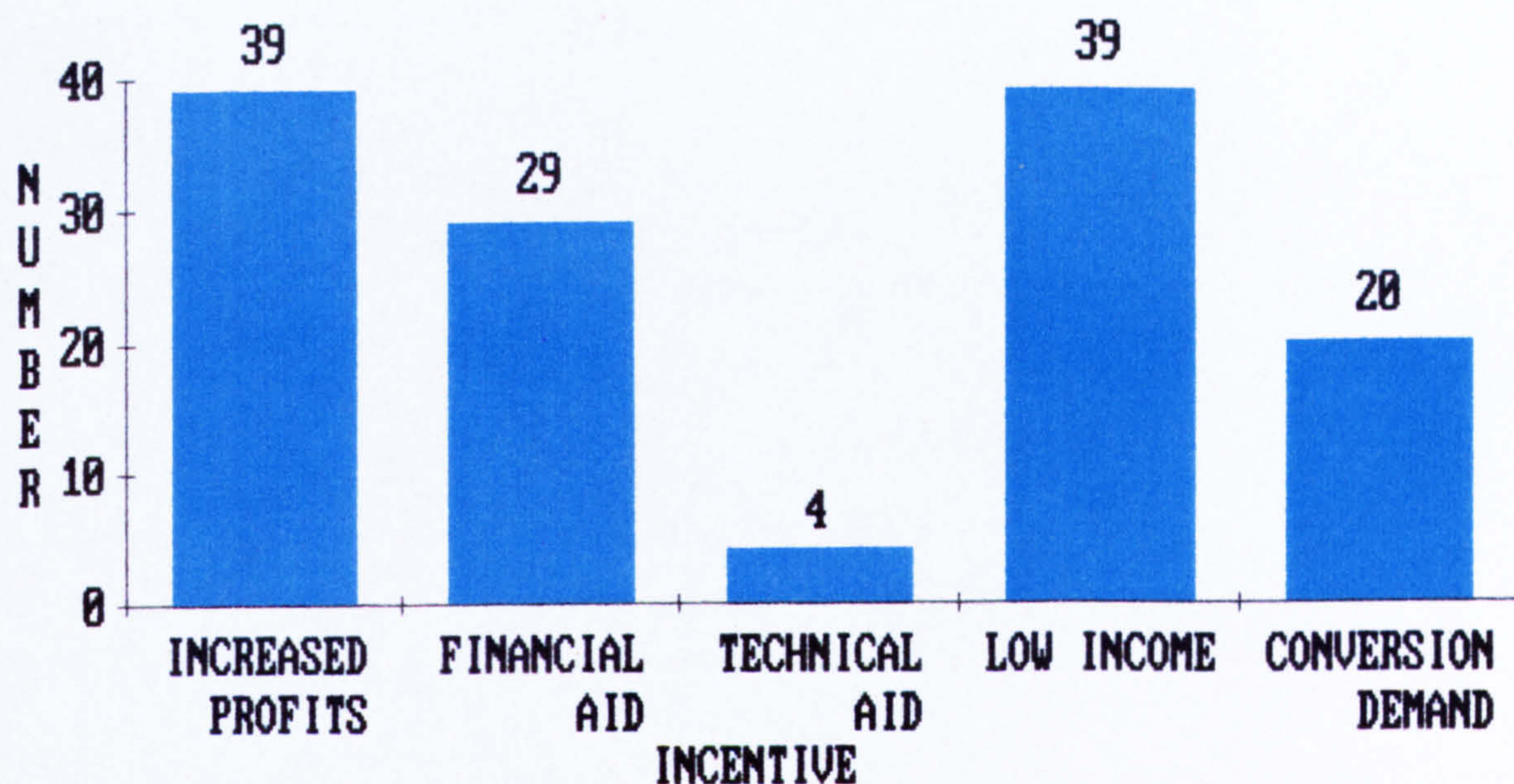
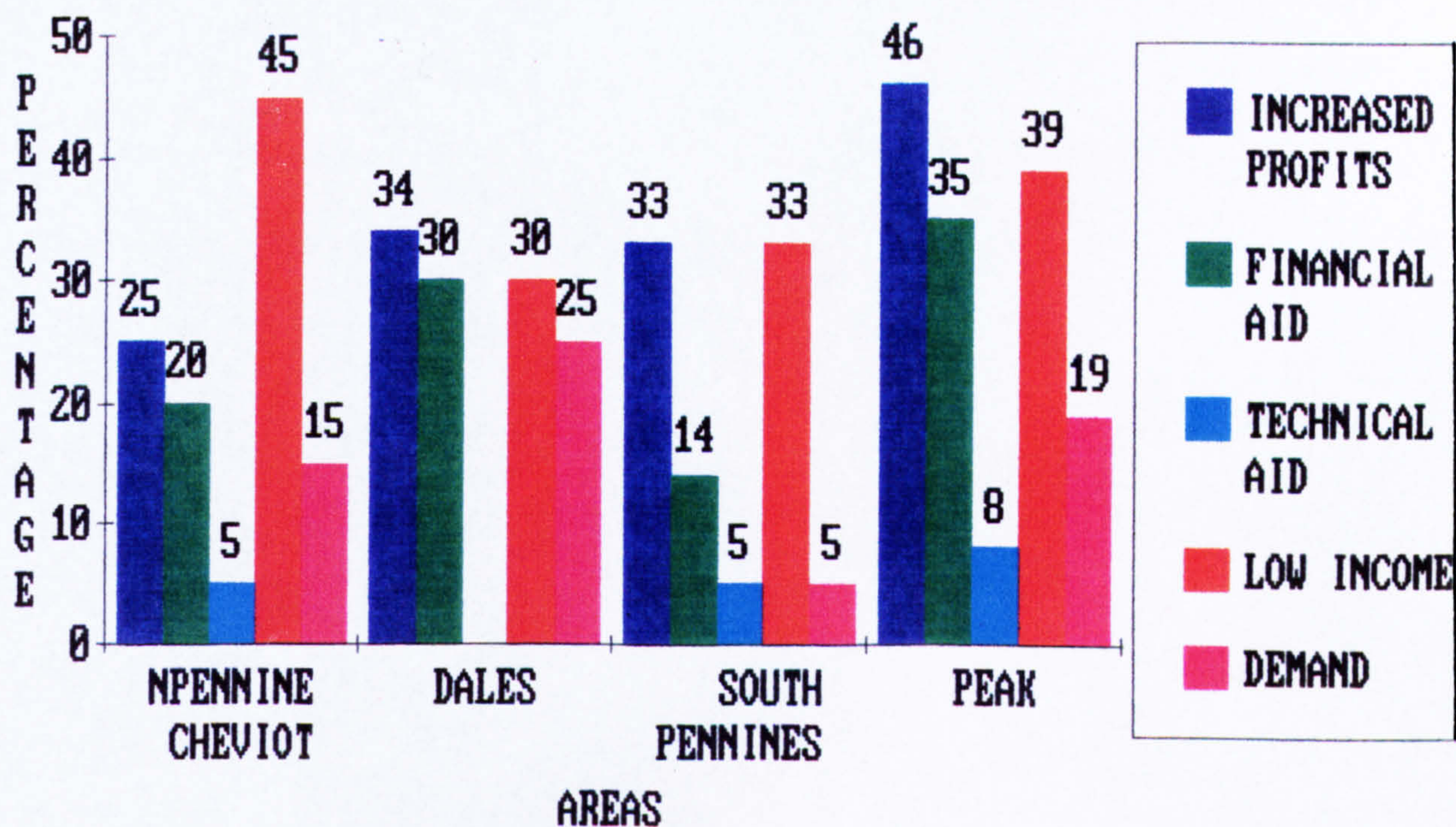


FIGURE 6.2 INCENTIVES TO CONVERT: PENNINE AREAS





The 'pull' effects of financial aid, demand and increased profits were all seen as important, with the perceived opportunity to increase profit margins being a particularly important 'pull' for conversion. The majority of Pennine farmers would, given the choice, prefer to remain purely in farming. For this reason 'push' factors are perhaps the most important forces stimulating conversion in the Pennines.

The responses outlined were broadly repeated on the area scale (fig. 6.2), but there were several anomalies. For example, the South Pennines had very few respondents who saw demand for conversions as the main incentive, 5% as opposed to 18% for the whole survey. The relative abundance of conversion in the South Pennines (fig. 6.2), could be an explanation, as it results in demand being taken for granted, rather than being viewed as an important incentive in conversion.

A second anomaly was that 57% of North Pennine farmers saw the reduced profitability of farming as the main incentive for conversion, this compares with 35% for the Pennine region. In view of the economic problems facing hill farming it would be expected that falling profit margins would provide a major stimulus for conversion throughout the whole region, so why the greater emphasis in the North Pennines? An explanation could be the impoverished nature of many parts of the area, as demonstrated by a range of evidence. Most importantly, the area had an aging population with 57% of respondents being over 60 years old, compared to 29% for the Pennine survey region. Such a demographic structure often indicates socio-economic problems. Further evidence is provided by the rising number of farm business failures in the area. An example is the case of Heathery-burn Farm (NY 904493) which went bankrupt leading the tenant to conclude "If I had sat in my house drawing the dole, I'd have had more to spend than by working Heatheryburn.". The immediate reason for this failure was the dramatic fall in sheep prices from £55 to £30 per head between 1988 and 1990 (Billen and Forster 1990 p44-45). Coupled with the already marginal

nature of the farming, such price falls were hard to absorb when costs remained high and interest payments may have to be maintained.

The case of Allenheads (NY 859453) provides further evidence of the incentives for conversion stemming from falling farm incomes and rural deprivation, although in this case the problems were not purely agricultural. Situated at the head of the East Allen Valley, Allenheads is one of the highest villages in England. Built on a dual economy of farming and lead mining, the village went into seemingly terminal decline as mining activity dwindled in the 20th century. This prompted an article to describe Allenheads as "a dying village, its serenity an illusion behind which stalk the familiar spectres of life today in upland Britain: neglect, depopulation and the withering away of essential public services" (Jackman 1985).

The dynamic response of the village is now well documented, with efforts to overcome the problems including the development of a village store, holiday cottages and a community centre. The conversion of a cow byre into a coffee shop provides an example of conversion contributing to re-generation (plate 6.1). The case of Allenheads highlights the extent of rural problems and how conversion can make a contribution to solving them, although the scale of the problem and responses, make it rather atypical (Allenheads Trust 1990, Northumberland County Council 1988).

### 6.3 Considerations in Conversions

Once a decision has been made to convert a TFB, a range of considerations determine the course of action to be taken. In questionnaire surveys farmers listed three main considerations when carrying out conversions: landscape conservation, the profit margins and the links with the local economy. These 3 considerations are discussed by combining data from the surveys of farmers and local planning authorities with



Plate 6.1 Former Cow Byre Converted into a Coffee Shop  
at Allenheads in the North Pennines (NY 859453)



FIGURE 6.3 CONSIDERATIONS IN CONVERSION: PENNINE FARMERS

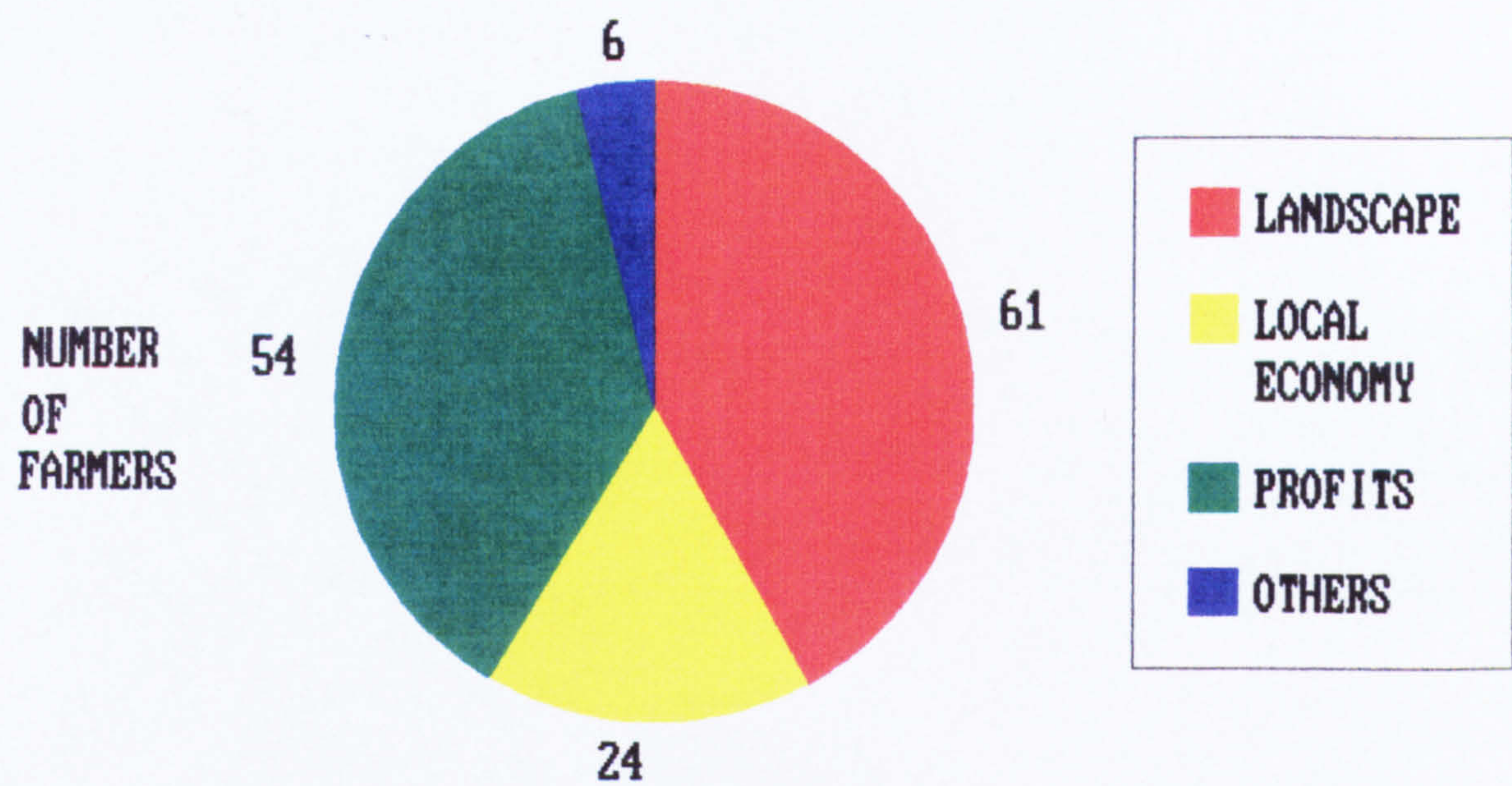




FIGURE 6.4

CONSIDERATIONS IN CONVERSION: PENNINE AREAS

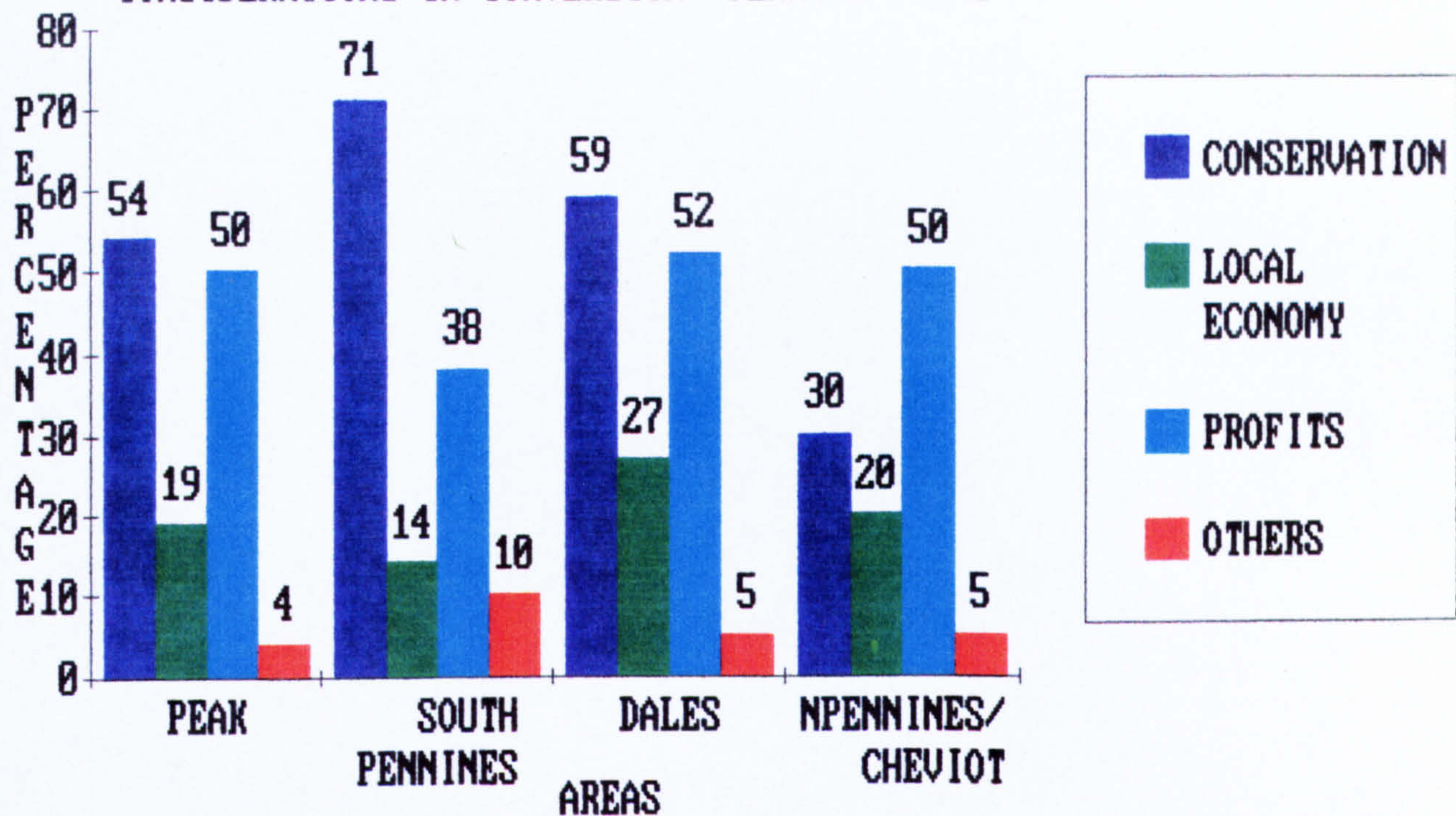
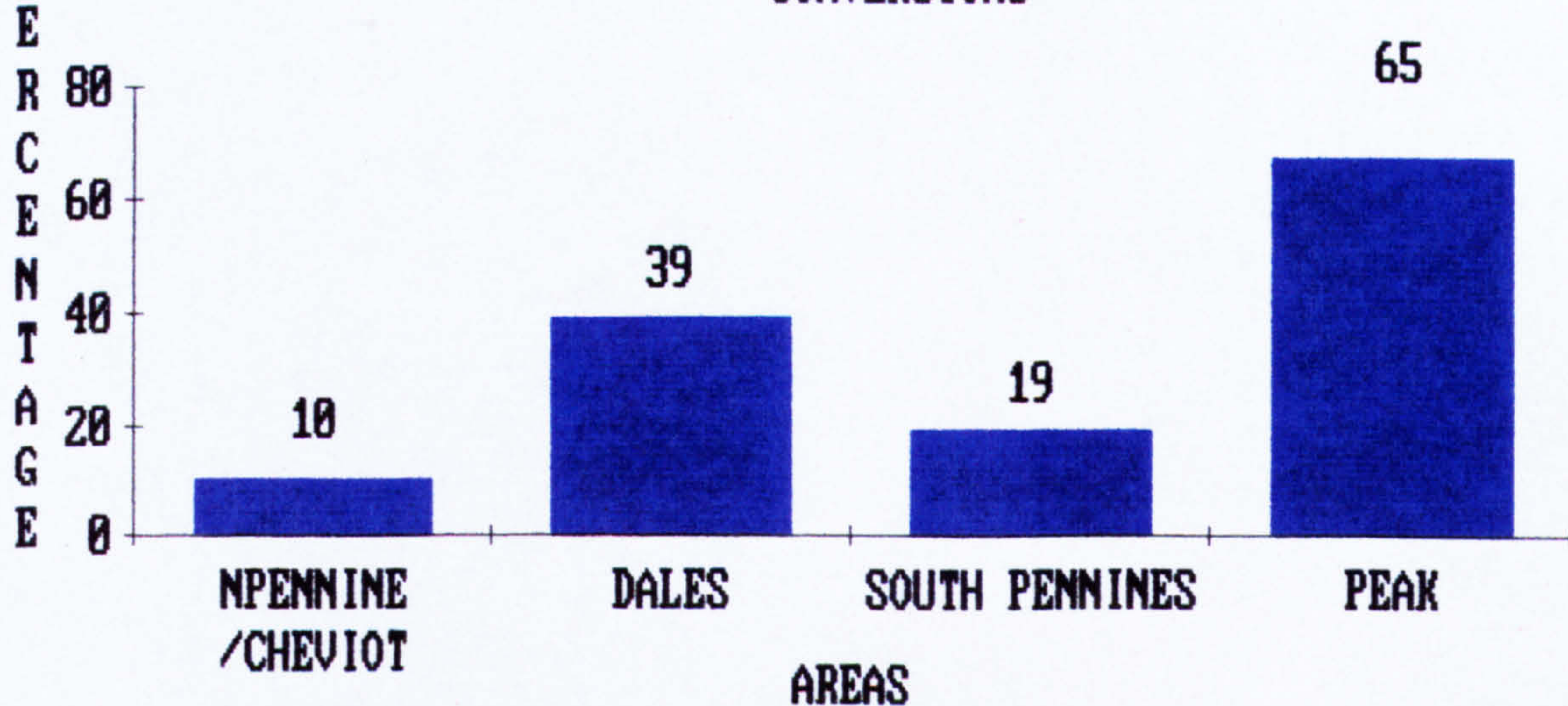


FIGURE 6.5

RESPONDENTS WHO CONSIDERED THAT DESIGNATED AREAS CONSTRAINED BARN CONVERSIONS





case studies. This then forms the basis for a more detailed discussion of practical considerations in 6.4.

### 6.3.1 Landscape Conservation

In the survey 61 farmers listed landscape conservation as the most important consideration. This compares with 54 for 'profit earning potential' and 24 for 'benefits to the local economy' (figure 6.3). This result seems a little surprising in view of the emphasis on agri-business outlined in chapter 4 but can be explained by a range of evidence.

Regional variations within the Pennines give an indication of the motives behind the emphasis on landscape conservation. Four of the five survey areas, identified landscape and building conservation as the most important consideration in conversion (fig 6.4). The North Pennines was the exception. As described in section 6.2, this is an area where rural poverty is well documented, which could provide an explanation for the greater emphasis on profit making potential in the areas responses. The correspondingly low response for conservation in the area could indicate an in-built suspicion of the aims and justifications for conservation. Evidence for this reaction comes from the very hostile response of the area's farmers to the establishment of the North Pennines AONB in 1985 (Franks 1985). No other AONB designations have generated quite such opposition amongst the farming community. Thus designated areas may well have influenced the perceived value placed on the conservation of TFBs, further evidence being provided in the National Parks.

The stringent planning controls which apply in National Parks generated a good deal of scepticism and opposition amongst the farming community. This was particularly evident in the survey where farmers had hoped to convert buildings to meet local housing need. However, evidence suggests that such intentions are unlikely to stand

the test of economic reality (Appendix I). National Park planning regimes seemed to have polarised views, leading to frustration over the emphasis placed on conservation. This is illustrated by the view of a Peak farmer: "What use is a derelict barn to the landscape when it could serve as a tastefully converted house which complements the landscape!". This farmer had previously been refused planning permission for a conversion scheme, so these views are not too surprising. However, similar views were expressed by many respondents, even from the upper echelons of the landowning community. For example the agent to the Chatsworth Estate in Derbyshire felt that landscape conservation was given too much emphasis in planning policies (1).

Such results may represent the typical views of landowners, but considering the long tradition of conservation and stewardship on major estates like Chatsworth, there would seem to be a degree of negative feedback from the operation of National Park policies. In this context 36% of farmers saw designated areas (mostly National Parks) as a constraint on conversion. This was especially true of the Peak where 65% of farmers saw National Park planning policies as a barrier to conversion (fig. 6.5). Interview evidence backed up these findings, with numerous conflicts between would-be convertors and the Peak Park Planning Board. In some senses these findings come as no surprise and they confirm anecdotal evidence of the rift between National Park policy and the needs of the farming, as seen from within the farming community, the health of which was seen as vital to conservation (2). The views of one Dales farmer exemplify this position: "Whilst being a supporter of the hopes and aims of the formation of the National Parks, they have in general degenerated into restrictive, negative bodies".

The general view was that there was a "price to pay" for saving old farm buildings, that price being the loss of some scenic value resulting from conversion (1). The farming community favoured conversion but wanted it to be "sensible, responsible



development" (Dales farmer), thus minimizing landscape degradation. In this sense the views of the farming community differed from those of planners in that socio-economic considerations were given greater emphasis by the farming community while planning authorities put more emphasis on environmental factors. Given an opportunity to rank conservation and socio-economic benefits in order of importance no local planning authorities saw socio-economic problems as 'most important' (fig. 6.6).

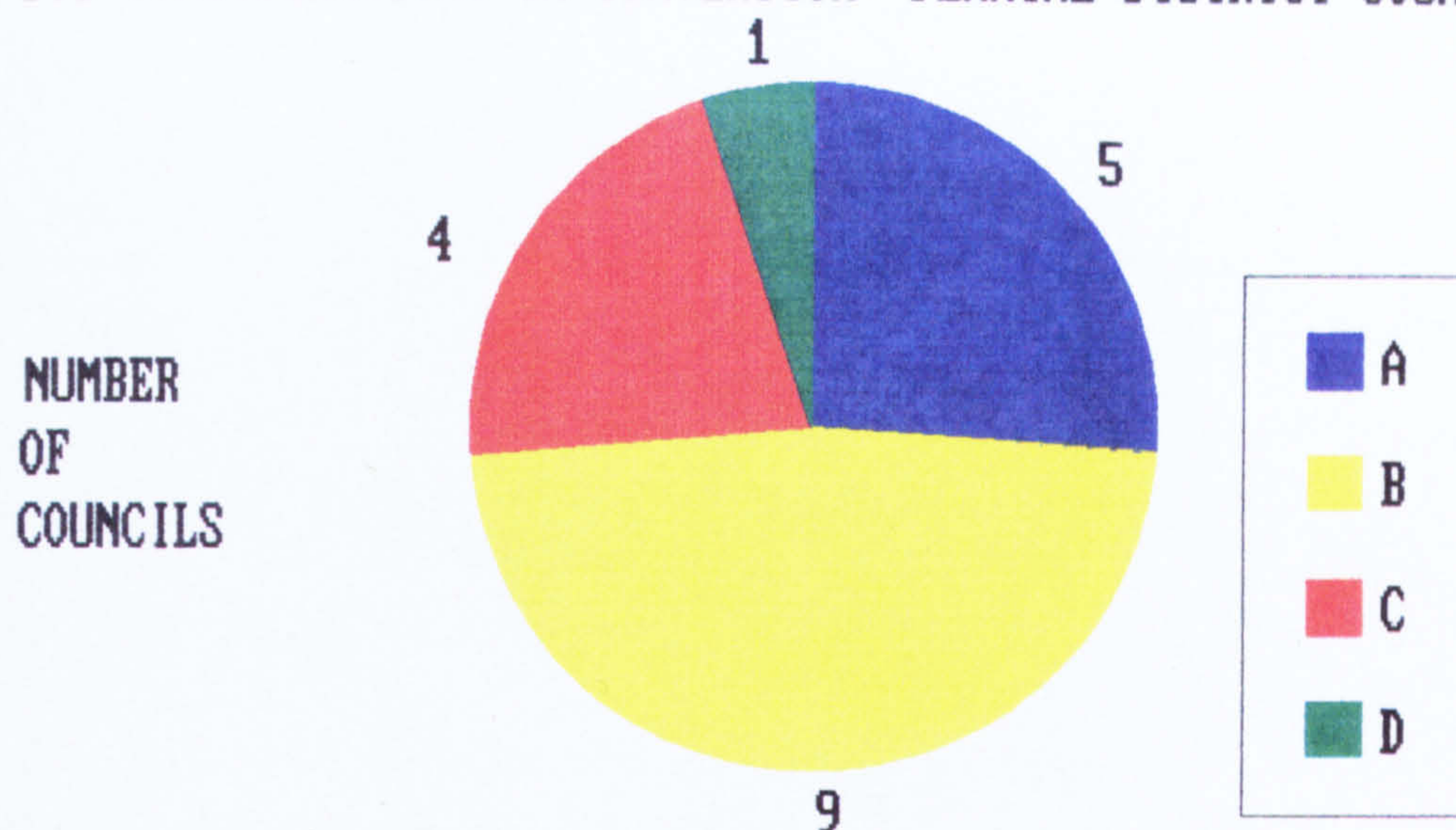
These results suggest a major perceptual dichotomy between the different parties involved. This theme was raised by Newby in his book 'Green and Pleasant Land' which raised the concept of a "functional aesthetic" in the farming community. To the farming community, an orderly, well managed, working landscape has great appeal (1979 p17). By contrast the local planning authorities and associated interest groups indicated a perceived value above the purely functional level, arguing that TFBs had an intrinsic value worthy of protection (fig. 6.6) (chapter 8).

### 6.3.2 Economic Considerations

In the Pennine survey 54 (49%) of farmers listed profit making potential as the most important consideration in conversion projects (fig.6.3), the highest area response being the Dales with 52% (fig. 6.4). As businessmen it is hardly surprising that so many farmers responded in this way. Low hill farm net incomes (£8800 [MAFF 1990]) mean that income generation is a prime consideration in conversion. As the Country Landowners Association (CLA) stated, the problem in farming is profit margins, not turnover (3). Selling off a barn for residential use can generate more disposable income than many years of farming activity.



FIGURE 6.6 CONSIDERATIONS IN CONVERSION: PENNINE DISTRICT COUNCILS



A= Landscape Conservation  
B= Architectural Conservation  
C= Less Dereliction  
D= Others

Plate 6.2 Barn Converted to Residential Use at East Halton in the Yorkshire Dales (SD 043 539)





Regional responses were broadly reflected at the area level. The one anomaly being the South Pennines where there was less emphasis on economic considerations and an abnormally high response for conservation.

One explanation could be that the close proximity of major urban areas has led to high level of conversion (29% of South Pennine farmers had converted compared to 23% for the population). Field evidence suggests that many farmers regret the social and aesthetic impact of conversion. This could result in an increased awareness of considerations such as landscape conservation amongst those who have converted, namely South Pennine farmers.

Understandably, profit making potential is a major consideration during conversion. However, it is not the overriding concern that might be expected of an entrepreneurial farming industry. Social and aesthetic concerns are given great weight, such as those described in the next section.

### **6.3.3 Benefits to the Local Economy**

Farmers were asked if benefits to the local economy were an important consideration influencing conversion decisions. This was essentially a measure of how far farmers viewed conversion as making a positive contribution to the local economy. There were two main issues; firstly the motives for responses, and secondly, the types of benefits envisaged.

Considering the first point, 22% of farmers considered that the social aspects of barn conversions were important. The area maximum was the Dales, where 27% of farmers saw social factors as important (Figure 6.4). It is to be expected that the highest results would be in those areas where the economy and society are under stress, such as areas experiencing considerable pressure from in-migration. Certainly

many respondents in the Dales complained about housing shortages brought about by in-migration. However there was no clear linkage between those mentioning concern about incomers, and those listing 'benefits to the local economy' as a consideration in barn conversions. This indicates that at the farm level, profits were viewed as more important than wider social aims.

Allied to regional variations land ownership patterns seem to have influenced this response, although the relationship is far from clear. Interviews with representatives of the large estates suggested that they saw benefits to the local economy as a very important aspect of conversion. For example, the Duke of Northumberlands estate was considering converting a farmstead at Barrasford (NY 916 734) with some of the residential units being proposed as low rent residential accommodation for local people. Similarly the Bolton Abbey Estate had assisted in the conversion of a barn to house an estate employee and his family (plate 6.2)(4,5). Returns from the questionnaire survey indicated equal concern for benefits to the local economy amongst smaller farms. For example, in the Dales less than half of the farmers who viewed benefits to the local economy as important worked units which were above the median farm size for the Pennines. It seems reasonable to assume that the smaller farmer, often of lower social standing, may have closer links with the local community than those on larger units. Hence the concerns for the well being of the local community and economy.

The overall conclusion must be that there was concern for the local community and economy amongst a wide spectrum of farming types and sizes.

#### **6.3.3.1 Types of Benefit Envisaged**

Most farmers who expressed a preference said that they would like conversions to be used for housing local people, a typical view coming from a Buckden farmer (SE 943



772): "with a better understanding on the behalf of the National Park and other authorities involved many redundant buildings could be converted for dwellings for local people". In reality barn conversions are usually priced beyond the reach of local people (6.5.1) and it would need considerable market intervention and the use of occupancy controls to achieve social ends. To this end, the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authorities (1989a) have introduced a policy restricting residential conversion to that serving local needs in many areas of the park.

Business conversions were seen as very important by local authorities. Many farmers supported this type of development (table 6.3), although there was considerable scepticism as to the extent of the benefits available. As the CLA Northern Regional Secretary commented: "Diversification can assist the wider rural economy, but it is unlikely to make a huge impact." (3).

## **6.4 Practical Considerations in Conversion**

So far this chapter has addressed the incentives and overall considerations which lie behind the decision to convert, but however strong and well intentioned these may be, the realities of conversion are usually dictated by practical considerations. These are principally: planning controls, design, finance, labour, land and locational factors (fig 2.3).

### **6.4.1 Planning Considerations**

The relationship between post-war planning and agriculture has been dominated by two basic principles; firstly, the need to protect agricultural land from development, and secondly, agriculture is largely deemed as permitted development which is exempt from planning control (DOE 1988d).

Three other planning principles affect conversions. Firstly, isolated non-essential development in the countryside is largely prohibited. Secondly, redundancy is normally a pre-requisite for conversion. Thirdly, the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act introduced the idea of designated areas, which were subject to special planning controls.

#### **6.4.1.1 What Needs Planning Permission**

The 1971 Town and Country Planning Act states that agricultural activity is not classed as development and as such does not require planning permission. Agriculture is defined as:

"horticulture, fruit growing, seed growing, dairy farming, the breeding and keeping of livestock .. , the use of land as grazing land, meadow land, osier land, market gardens and nursery grounds, and the use of land for woodlands where that use is ancillary to the farming of land for other purposes."

Certain agricultural buildings and engineering operations do constitute development but are regarded as permitted subject to standard conditions without the need for express planning permission.

The extent of permitted development rights is outlined in Part 6 of the 1988 General Development Order. This specifies occupancy, business and management criteria (6), with the aim of excluding hobby and part-time farmers. In effect only farmhouses, livestock units, large buildings accesses and development near roads requires planning permission.

Additional restrictions on permitted development rights apply in National Parks where a 28 day prior notification scheme operates, enabling the Park authorities to influence the siting and design of new buildings. Pressure is growing to introduce full planning controls to National Parks, reflecting the view expressed by Brunskill that



"farm buildings are so important a part of the landscape which justified designation in the first place" (1982 p148).

Conversion to non-agricultural activities is not covered by permitted development rights. As such the move to diversification has resulted in increasing contact between farmers and planners, moving from a previously mutually supportive relationship to one where conflict seems more likely, as outlined in 6.3.1 (CLA 1989a p25).

This increased contact has generated a wide ranging debate over the likely relationship between planning and agriculture in the 1990's. With this in mind the DOE published a consultation paper 'Planning Controls Over Agricultural and Forestry Buildings in England and Wales' (1990a). The main tenet of this document was a proposal to bring all farm buildings under the prior notification arrangements which operate in the National Parks. Representing the farming lobby, the CLA's 'Greenwell Report' proposed a similar arrangement, but claimed that diversification activities should enjoy permitted development rights. This would have far reaching consequences for the conservation and conversion of farm buildings should it ever become planning policy (CLA 1989a). The CPRE has gone even further by calling for full planning control over all farm buildings (1990a+b).

### 6.4.2 Design Considerations

Design is a major consideration in determining the acceptability of conversion. However there is considerable disagreement over the extent to which local planning authorities (LPAs) should become involved in matters of design, as a material consideration in determining planning applications. In order to offer guidance many LPAs have been active in producing and promoting design guides, an example being Essex County Councils 'The Essex Countryside: Historic Barns' (1979). Pennine planning authorities seem to have been less active in this respect, with only one

District Planning Authority stating that they had a specific design guide dealing with TFBs. This could indicate either a lack of awareness of 'the problem' or that there is less pressure for change in the Pennines. Evidence points to the latter explanation. Firstly, the Pennines do not have the concentration of buildings of extremely high historic value found elsewhere. Secondly, the most specific design guide identified was from Richmondshire D.C., an area which includes Swaledale with its very high concentration of barns (chapter 5). This area is atypical of the Pennines in general and appears to be the exception which proves the rule.

Planning controls have been relaxed to facilitate conversion. However, LPAs have found themselves in a difficult situation, caught between increased development pressure and an increasingly vociferous conservation lobby, concerned at the adverse effects of conversion. LPAs are often accused of adopting an inflexible approach to planning applications involving TFBs. However the rigid nature of planning regulations means that any relaxation to facilitate a favoured development runs the risk of creating a precedent for future applications.

#### **6.4.2.1 Building Regulations**

The more functional aspects of design (construction, fire safety, and environmental issues) are covered by the Building Regulations, as defined in the 1984 Building Act (these latest regulations were enforced in 1985). Compliance with the regulations is essential for most conversions, and is separate from planning permission (Wilkinson 1987 p185).

The Building Regulations present a number of problems for would-be convertors. Firstly, the inflexible nature of the regulations means that modern standards of health and safety have to be applied to historic structures, something which can prove impossible without a radical alteration of a buildings structure, and consequent loss of



historic and architectural value. Such alterations can be costly calling into question the viability of a conversion. An example from Derbyshire illustrates this point. In 1981 the Chatsworth estate proposed establishing several Camping Barns (7). However, the rigid application of building regulations created many problems over health and safety. Eventually agreement was reached to classify the structures as camping facilities, thus avoiding building regulations, but creating the farcical situation where the barns were classified as "moveable"! (Duchess of Devonshire 1982 p18).

Since 1981 some local authorities have become more flexible in enforcing building regulations. In this way the Peak Park Joint Planning Board was able to set up a network of Camping Barns as commercial ventures. The idea of simple accommodation has been largely retained, although basic services, such as toilets are mandatory for public facilities (Countryside Commission [CC] 1986). For these low budget conversions the cost of compliance with the building regulations can dramatically affect the viability of the whole project. An example is the Yorkshire Dales Bunkhouses (7). Originally intended as very basic accommodation, the enforcement of stringent building regulations, such as separating cooking and sleeping areas, led to increased conversion costs. This meant that standards had to be increased up to Youth Hostel level if returns were to be high enough to stand any chance of showing a return on the investment (CC 1980). Jane Fawcett summed up the missed opportunity: "The original intention of providing walkers with a stone tent ... vanished in a welter of inappropriate building regulations" (1982 p24).

Higher standard conversions tend to pose fewer fundamental problems in meeting the Regulations but costs can still be significant. For example at one farm hotel the cost of installing fire doors came to around £4000. On the positive side one self-catering operator saw building regulations as ultimately increasing the quality of conversions, as they removed the temptation to cut corners in building construction.

The basic problem has been the inflexible application of modern standards to traditional buildings which invariably fail to measure up to current standards on fire, structure, health and public safety. At best compliance with regulations can result in delays and increased costs. At worst it can result in the abandonment of a scheme, or result in major alterations which detract from the conservation value of historic buildings. As Darley concluded: "in the case of many historic buildings, the regulations were often the cause of delay, unsatisfactory design and even the defeat of a scheme." (1988 p49). Despite such criticisms, there can be no justification for compromising safety in the interests of conservation.

Darley argues that the situation has improved with the introduction of the 'new' building regulations in 1985. Particularly because "Past usage and experience are now allowed as a method of justifying the use of traditional materials and workmanship." (1988 p49). However some decisions still seem a little absurd. For example at Bishop Field there was difficulty in obtaining a drinks licence owing to the pitch of the stairs! In reality, generalisations can be rather spurious, each case having to be judged on its own merits. As Boutwood stressed, compromise, negotiation and flexibility are the ways to achieve good conversion (1982 p12).

#### **6.4.2.2 Practical Design**

The subjective and case specific nature of design makes it difficult to analyse. However, most policy makers and practitioners are agreed that there are two recurring and complementary themes in conversion work: the desire to minimize alterations and the need to preserve a building's essential characteristics. Most conversions adhere to these principles but exceptions can be identified. For instance, the Richmondshire D.C. design guide allows for 'cottage-style' conversions "in a small number of cases" (1984 p2-3). This is at odds with the aim of minimizing alterations. In a similar fashion HRH the Prince of Wales supported the construction of chimneys on



residential conversions, rather than the use of metal flue pipes (HRH 1991). By contrast Peter Richards argued that "chimney stacks are quite alien to a barn but metal flues ... can be fitted inconspicuously" (1982 p11). It can only be concluded that the design of conversions is a matter of personal taste, the application of architectural skills and judgement of environmental acceptability. As such, any conclusions drawn are invariably subjective.

#### **6.4.2.3 Structural Factors**

The physical suitability of a building for conversion depends mainly on its form and structural condition. Successful conversion schemes should retain the essential characteristics of TFBs which can be described as: simplicity, functionality and robustness, with few windows and doors. The incompatibility of many barns with residential requirements is a major reason for the refusal of planning permission. Similarly, the existing form of a barn influences the scope of non-residential conversions. Internal sub-divisions, door size and the number of floors can all influence the types of operations which are feasible. For example, Hill concluded that 50% of TFBs would be difficult to extend, an obvious deterrent for many businesses.

The state of repair also influences conversion possibilities as planning permission is rarely given for totally ruined structures, which require virtual rebuilding. Even so many conversions require considerable structural work, the cost of which can be a crucial element in the viability of development. For example, a proposal to re-roof a Dales barn was estimated at £6804 (Yorkshire Dales National Park Committee 1991). Such costs can form a significant proportion of total spending, the potential scale of which can be measured in the light of Hill's findings that 42% of roofs on upland TFBs, were in a 'fair or poor' condition. In practice the planning authorities attempt to ensure that structural factors do not turn conversion into re-building but, having

granted planning permission for conversion, it is not always possible to prevent demolition followed by the erection of what is effectively a new building.

### **6.4.3 Financial Considerations**

Unless there are overriding personal or social motives, conversions will not succeed without a sound financial basis. Viability depends on both the nature of the project and the state of the existing farm business. In this context, 28% of Pennine farmers blamed financial reasons for their decision not to convert, an indication of the financial constraints present. Interviews with practitioners suggest that there are three categories of convertors; firstly there are the marginal farmers with low incomes and debt problems, for whom conversion is rarely a realistic option. At the other extreme are the large landowners, for whom many conversions are merely 'pocket money' and are not crucial for business survival. In between there are the 'middle band' of farmers, for whom conversions can generate useful additional income, helping to support traditional farming systems (8,9). One possible anomaly is where conversions are carried out on a charitable basis, for instance by the National Trust. In such cases commercial viability may be less important.

#### **6.4.3.1 Sources of Finance**

Most funding for farm building conversion comes from private sources and bank borrowing. However, grants and loans from other sources are available and can be significant. The introduction of the Farm Diversification Scheme in 1988 made MAFF the principal source of grant aid for such work, a position which has been reinforced by the abolition of ETB and most RDC grants for tourist accommodation in 1989. The RDC remains the principal body for grant aiding business conversions, providing 25% grants for conversion of redundant buildings in Rural Development Areas (which cover most of the survey area)(10). The RDC also gives grant aid of up to 50% to help local authorities assist conversions (11). However, in the Pennines



only 10% of LPAs aid that they had so far used this facility. Outside RDA's the RDC can provide loans of up to 30% of project costs (1990 p6). The most recent funding change has been the ending of grants for tourist accommodation under the Farm Diversification Scheme. The reason for the change was the generally low returns most farmers received from such conversions (MAFF 1991).

Residential conversion is not usually eligible for grant aid. This is because it tends to be viewed as a less desirable option by policy makers, and in any case, it is capable of financing itself, especially when mortgage support is available.

Grants are available where the farm building is of proven historic interest, usually a Listed Building (12), or one in a Conservation Area (13). Historic buildings are eligible for a whole range of grants and loans, as outlined in the 'Directory of Public Sources of Grants for the Repair and Conversion of Historic Buildings' (Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission [English Heritage] 1988) . There are two main sources. Firstly local authorities are empowered by the 'Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act' (1990) to give grants of up to 50% for the upkeep of listed buildings. In the Pennines 43% of District Councils said that they would consider using this source for farm buildings. Secondly, English Heritage can provide a range of grants for maintenance and restoration work on Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas (English Heritage 1988).

Other possible sources of finance, include the Countryside Commission (for recreation work) and MAFF through the LFA's scheme . For business conversions there are a range of national initiatives including the enterprise allowance scheme, the business expansion scheme, the Princes Trust and the Loan Guarantee Scheme (RDC 1990 p6).

Grant aid is unlikely to cover all the costs of a conversion, but it can tip the balance in favour of undertaking development or pursuing a specific conversion option. Most government agencies do not give multiple grants, although there are some notable exceptions (14). As such total grant aid is unlikely to add up to, more than 50% of project costs, so that most conversion work demands significant personal outlay and risk. For this reason conversion is unlikely to offer salvation to farms which are struggling financially. Indebtedness acts as a disincentive to risk taking and further borrowing. In such cases financial backing is unlikely to be forthcoming and the only option would be to sell the property, perhaps with the benefit of planning permission for conversion and the enhanced value which this brings.

#### 6.4.3.2 Costing Out the Options

Financial viability of conversion depends on the balance between investment capital, conversion costs, cashflow and the timescale of operation. In turn, these depend on the type of use chosen (Wilkinson 1987 p199). Being farm based, many of the conversions discussed have negligible site purchase, labour and material costs. This creates the potential for substantially increased profits and enhances the viability of the project.

The cost of structural works obviously varies according to the condition of the buildings and the type of end use. In many cases the cost of laying on services can be the single most expensive outlay, particularly in scenic areas such as the Pennines, where electricity may have to be undergrounded at considerable expense. For example, a Dales farmer quoted the cost of installing electricity at £4000 per 100yds.

Other costs may include income tax, VAT and , although income tax relief is available for repairs and maintenance and no VAT is charged on listed building works. Many conversions are assessed for Business Rate. This has had serious



implications for smaller enterprises such as Bed and Breakfast establishments, which are rated if the business is open for more than 100 days a year. Conversion can also increase insurance costs particularly where Public Liability Insurance is needed (Wilkinson 1987 p208).

Where business conversions are let, rents are commonly between £2-2.50 per ft<sup>2</sup> with a short term lease of three years (4) being the norm. This contrasts with longer agricultural leases, which are usually over 20 years (Wilkinson 1987 p210). The relative insecurity of short term leases was seen as a disincentive to business conversion by a number of respondents.

As well as conversion costs it is essential to consider likely cash flows over the initial period of operation. Underestimation of costs and pay back periods is a major reason for failed conversions. Feasibility studies can help to overcome this problem and are encouraged by the Farm Diversification Scheme. For example, the feasibility study for Clark House Camping Barn (6.5.2.1) estimated the pay back period at 13 years and on this basis recommended changes (reduced booking fees and increased overnight charges) to make the project more attractive (MAFF 1989c p18).

In concluding this section, it is clear that non-residential conversions are rarely an attractive economic proposition to farmers. Indeed, most of the case studies outlined in 6.5, involve cases where farming has ceased, or has been scaled down. Such economic factors are often at odds with the aspirations of farmers and policy makers regarding conversion. This point is illustrated by the fact that 28% of Pennine farmers saw business conversions as most desirable, yet business use accounted for only 13% of total conversions.

#### 6.4.4 Labour Resources

Case studies (6.5) suggested that conversion rarely generates significant demand for hired labour. Although some of the larger business conversions can be significant employers at least in the context of remote upland areas. In this context, McInerney and Turner (1991) recorded an average of only 0.28 hired persons per enterprise nationwide.

Conversely on-farm labour resources can be placed under great pressure by the additional demand created by conversion and its associated enterprises. The stage of development of the farming family can influence the decision to convert. Several respondents cited the need to support a growing family as the reason for conversion. Equally, development at a later stage can benefit from greater family labour resources, as in the case of Bishop Field Farm (6.5).

Total labour requirements associated with conversion are limited (chapter 8), with most work being carried out by using existing farm labour resources. However this in itself can be of significance to small rural communities and in the way that it influences traditional family farm structures.

#### 6.4.5 Land Resources

Farm size, type and ownership also need to be considered. It may be generally assumed that larger farms are more likely to promote conversion work because they enjoy greater physical and financial resources. Evidence from the Pennines suggests otherwise. In the region 34% of small farms of less than 100 ha. had undertaken conversion projects compared to 22% of larger farms (over 100ha). The strong tradition of part-time farming and pluriactivity on upland farms could well account for this relationship. As in these cases small farms have to diversify in order to remain economically viable.



Land ownership has important implications for the conversion process. Most commentators agree that tenants are less likely to undertake conversions involving long pay back periods. For example, ADAS took the view that tenant farming acted "as a disincentive" to most conversions (8). Not owning the farm, tenants do not stand to obtain long term benefit from projects, unless they have security of tenure or a philanthropic landlord. This is particularly relevant to developments such as tourist accommodation which may give limited returns in terms of annual income but can offer an appreciating asset to the landlord. Such a benefit is of little use to tenant farmers and may even work to their long term disadvantage. This is because the increased value of holdings following conversion can lead to revaluation and rents rises, thus penalising tenants and providing a further disincentive to conversion. The simple fact that enthusiasm for conversion is necessary from two sources (tenant and landlord) provides a further disincentive for conversion.

The terms of most tenancies leave responsibility for farm buildings with the landlord (Gregory and Sydenham 1990). Thus in theory, the attitudes of a landlord could result in a building becoming redundant, if conversion were the only viable option for a buildings retention. However, only 3% of farmers blamed redundancy of buildings on ownership structures. Some tenants stated that their landlord was not keen to see conversion. Others worried about who would benefit from conversion. As one North Pennine farmer explained "The farm is rented from Lord Crewe. Who would be the benefactors?".

On the whole, interviews with agents for the major Pennine estates suggested that they had a flexible attitude towards conversion, but were not promoting it aggressively. Both Chatsworth and Bolton Abbey estates gave examples where tenants had converted buildings, with estate backing (6.5)(1,5). However, such views were not universal. For example, the Northumberland estate stated that they were "not

pushing for enterprise, change and conversions" (4). This estate still believed in agriculture as the mainstay of the rural economy.

Most local planning authorities (LPAs) who expressed a preference (71%), felt that owner occupiers were more likely to convert, with the Northumberland National Park commenting that tenants were "often prevented from converting or feel it is not worthwhile on a property which is not theirs". This may be a reflection of the high levels of tenant farming in the area (43% of all farmers) (MAFF 1989d).

Most of the development agencies agreed that tenants were less likely to convert and that if they did it was usually to low cost, low risk ventures. This view was largely supported by field evidence which showed that projects were located on owner occupied farms or were carried out directly by the estates (6.5). The few examples of tenant conversion included small scale Bed and Breakfast development and a cafe business (6.5).

Landownership is a rather inflexible and long term consideration. In this sense it is perhaps the most important factor in determining the nature of conversion, although locational factors are also important, particularly in determining the type of conversion undertaken.

#### **6.4.6 Locational Factors**

Both site and situation influence the conversion process. The layout of the farmstead is important in considering the potential for both residential and non-residential conversions. The location of public facilities on a working farm has obvious implications for public safety, security, privacy and the future development of the farm business. Residential conversion can also create a number of problems if the new occupants are not wholly sympathetic with the needs of a working farm. Several



respondents cited cases of litigation over nuisance issues, such as noise and smell, which are associated with a working farm. In this context, amendments to the General Development Order mean that farmers stand to lose permitted development rights on livestock buildings sited within 400 metres of residential accommodation (DOE 1988d). Similarly any future extension of planning controls over agriculture may lead to even greater restrictions.

Service provision is a particularly important consideration, as the cost of laying on mains supplies to remote buildings can be a strong disincentive to conversion. Most conversions require vehicular access and parking facilities, the costs of which can be significant if facilities are not readily available. All the case study farms had adequate access, but this contrasts with the findings of Hill that only 33% of upland farm buildings had 'surfaced access'. Planning permission can hinge on the availability of adequate access and parking facilities. Such provision is a normal requirement in local plans and is usually insisted upon by highway authorities. Certainly many Pennine LPAs expressed concern over increased traffic flows on country roads, particularly in relation to business conversions. Most of the case studies did have suitable parking space available. Even where such space was not available, adjacent land can often be utilised to create parking spaces, as in the case of Storiths Farm (plate 6.3).

Table 6.1 demonstrates the relative inaccessibility of Pennine TFBs, compared to the national level. While this remoteness does present problems, it can be a positive attraction for individuals, and small firms searching for high quality living and working environment. The importance of accessibility really depends on the nature of the conversion. For many residential conversions the remote rural setting is a positive selling point especially where there is reasonable access to major centres of employment, such as in the Tyne Valley in Northumberland which has easy access to Newcastle-upon-Tyne.



Plate 6.3 Conversion of a barn into a cafe at Storiths in the Yorkshire Dales (SE 081 543). Car parking facilities had to be created on pasture land.



Table 6.1      Accessibility of Conversions

Distance from: (km)	National (Hill 1985)	Pennines Survey
Classified Road	1.5	2.6
Trunk Road	3.6	8.2
Town	9.9	9.7

N.B. Data from Hills national survey applies to all buildings, whereas the Pennine data applies only to conversions.



Rural locations can also be an incentive for certain businesses. Firms which are unconstrained by the locational factors associated with urban areas are likely to be attracted by the high quality of the rural environment. In some cases a rural situation and even location in converted TFBs can be important in promoting a firms image.

The location of commercial enterprises in rural areas often necessitates the use of roadside signs and advertising. Field evidence suggests that this is also a controversial issue with some local authorities rigourously enforcing controls on unauthorised roadside advertisements, while other authorities were "turning a blind eye" (North Pennines farmer). Despite these potential conflicts it should be stressed that none of the case study conversions were heavily reliant on casual trade, thus reducing the need for extensive roadside advertising.

In the light of the aims, aspirations and practical considerations discussed, the next section outlines the options for conversion in the Pennines, which by implication involves the evaluation of traditional farm buildings in the Pennines.

## 6.5 The Options

If the various incentives and considerations outlined lead to a decision to convert then there are four basic options available:

- sell the buildings in their unimproved state;
- obtain planning permission and sell;
- obtain planning permission, convert and sell;
- obtain planning permission, convert and manage.

In addition, there are a few cases property is leased out to other operators. However, McInerney (1989) found that only 5% of all diversifications involved leasing, such an arrangement being particularly common with workshop conversions.



Figure 6.7 Occupancy of Residential Conversions: The Options

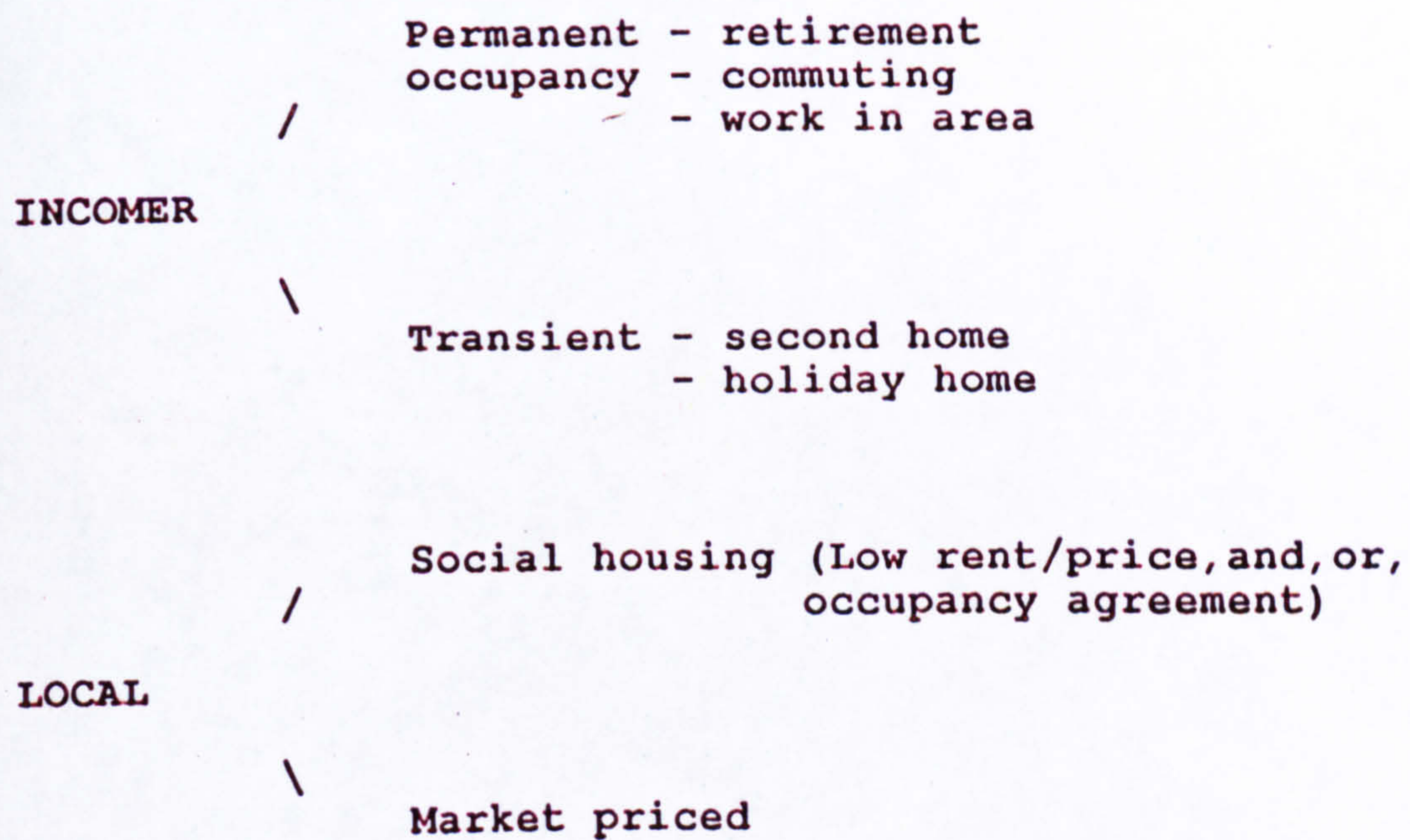
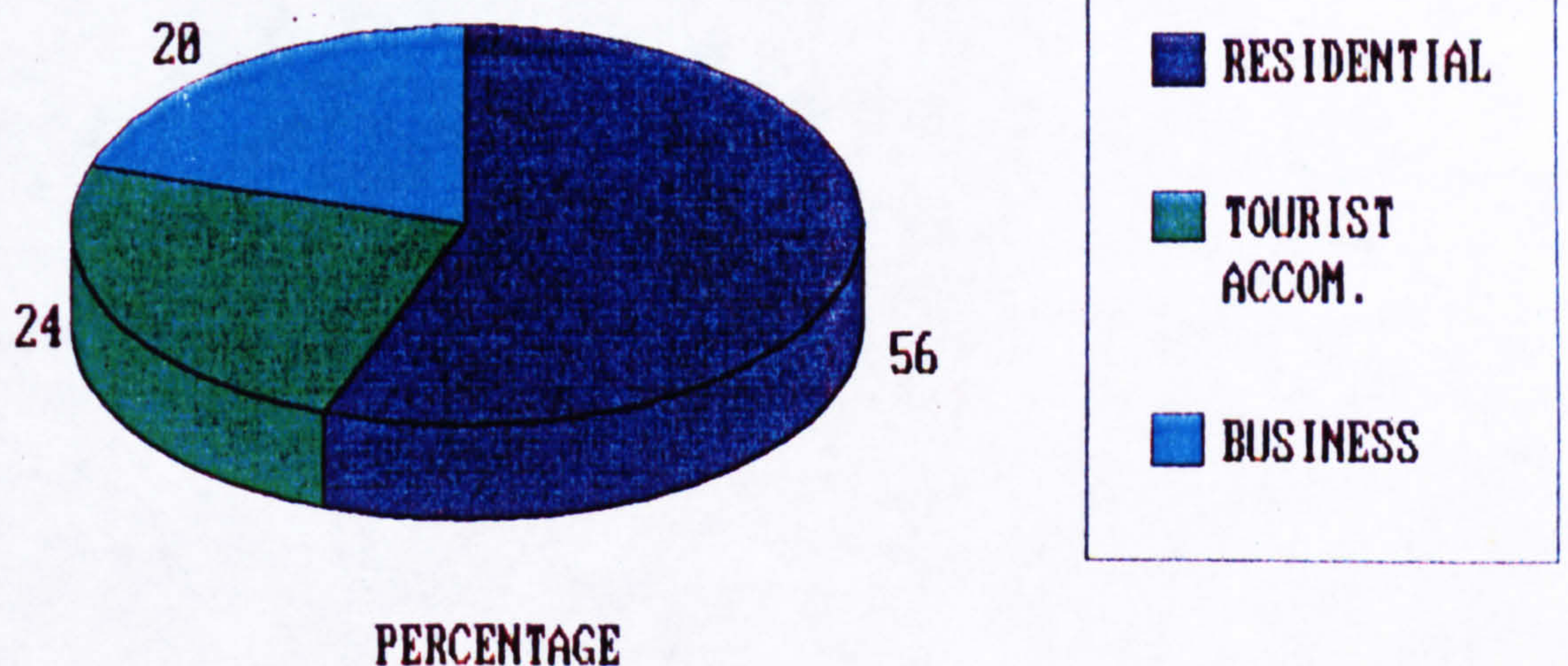


FIGURE 6.8 TYPES OF CONVERSION IN THE PENNINES





The course of action chosen, depends on the relative weight given to need, opportunity and inclination. In reality most schemes turn out to be a question of balancing aesthetic and practical considerations. Four major conversion options can be identified: residential, tourist accommodation, business and others. These options are discussed in the following sections.

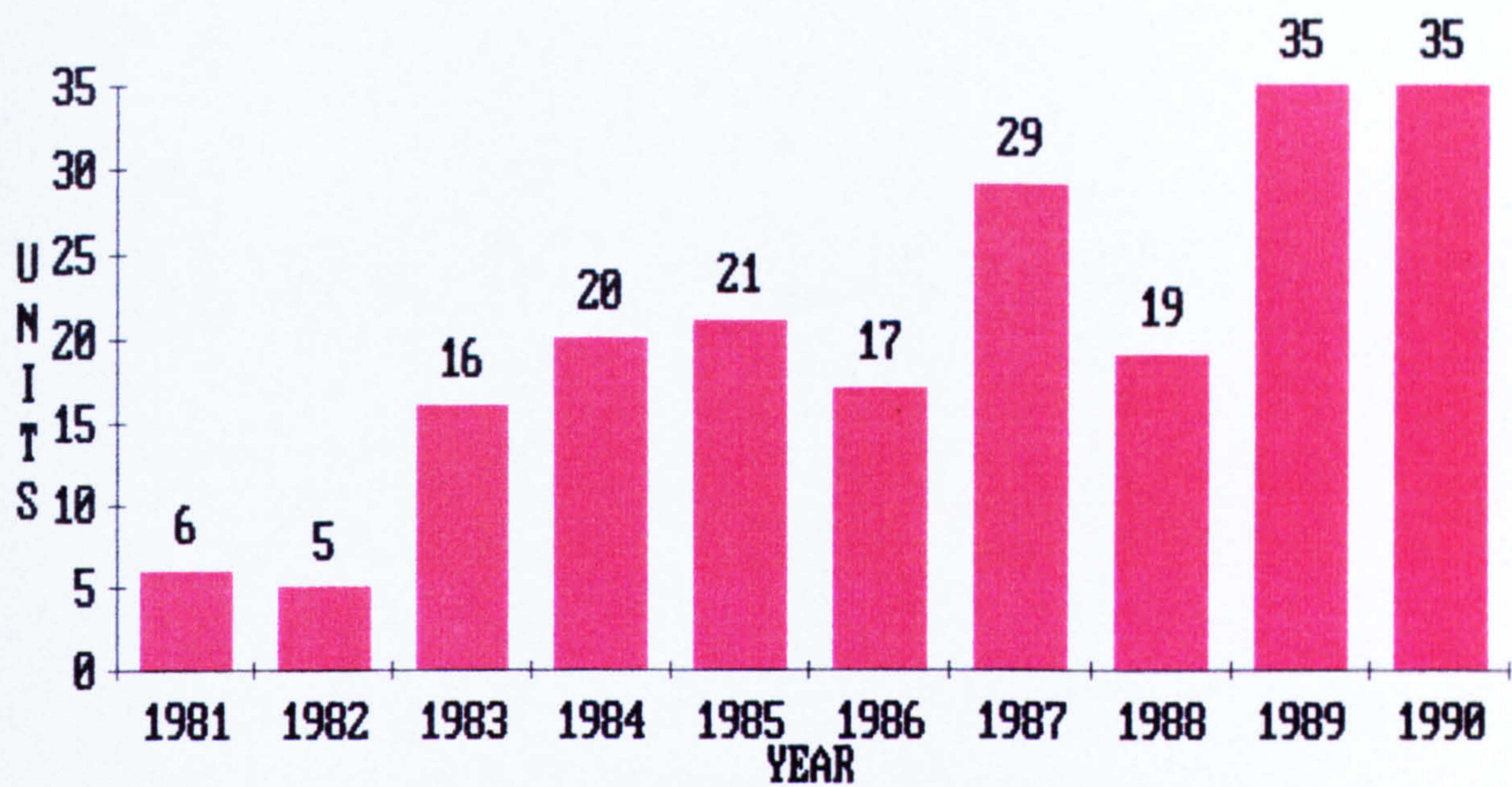
### 6.5.1 Residential Conversion

There are several options for residential conversions, ranging from housing for local need to that sold on the open market. Figure 6.7 outlines the various options which exist but few of them are clear cut and there exist a number of grey areas, firstly, what is a local? Secondly, in multiple ownership which home is counted as the permanent residence? Finally, how does one distinguish between residential and tourist accommodation?

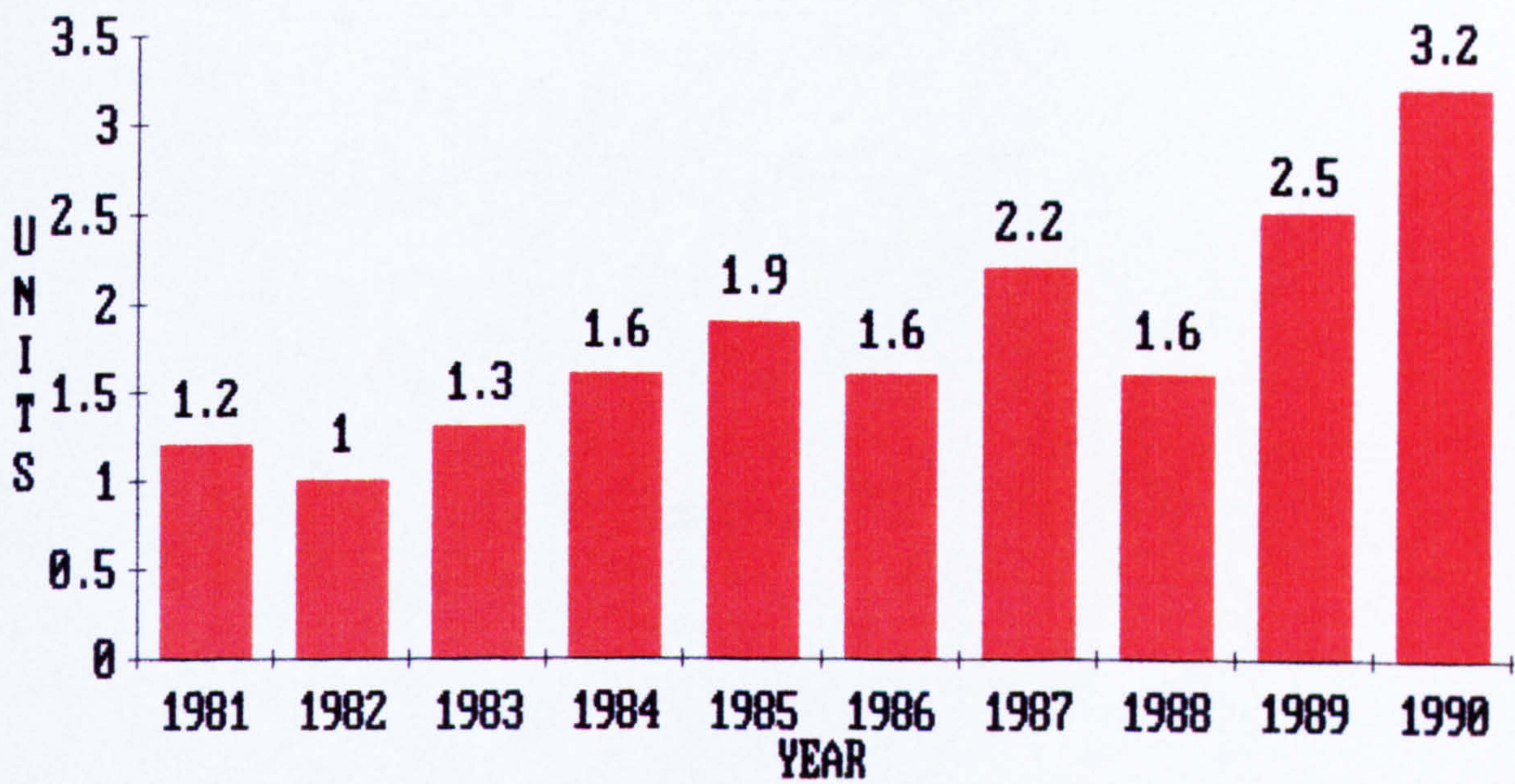
Newby (1979) suggested several aspects to being a local: social values and orientation, workplace, type of job and length of occupancy. Of these facets the social orientation and values held are perhaps the most important. It is not enough to simply live and work in an area. A local has to be 'part' of an area. In this context, although many second home owners might consider a country cottage as their main home, such people often have an urban orientation which means they cannot truly be considered as locals. In answer to the third question, the dividing line between residential and tourist accommodation is essentially where the servicing and ownership of the building are the responsibility of the resident. This distinction has been given further clarification by the Inland Revenue, who define a holiday letting as being available for public letting for 140 or more days per year. Equally, such a building should not be occupied continuously for more than 31 days at a time.



**FIGURE 6.9**  
**NUMBER OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR RESIDENTIAL CONVERSIONS:**  
**TYNEDALE DISTRICT 1981-1990**



**FIGURE 6.10 MEAN SIZE OF RESIDENTIAL CONVERSION APPLICATIONS:**  
**TYNEDALE DISTRICT 1981-1990**





### 6.5.1.1 Residential Conversions in the Pennines

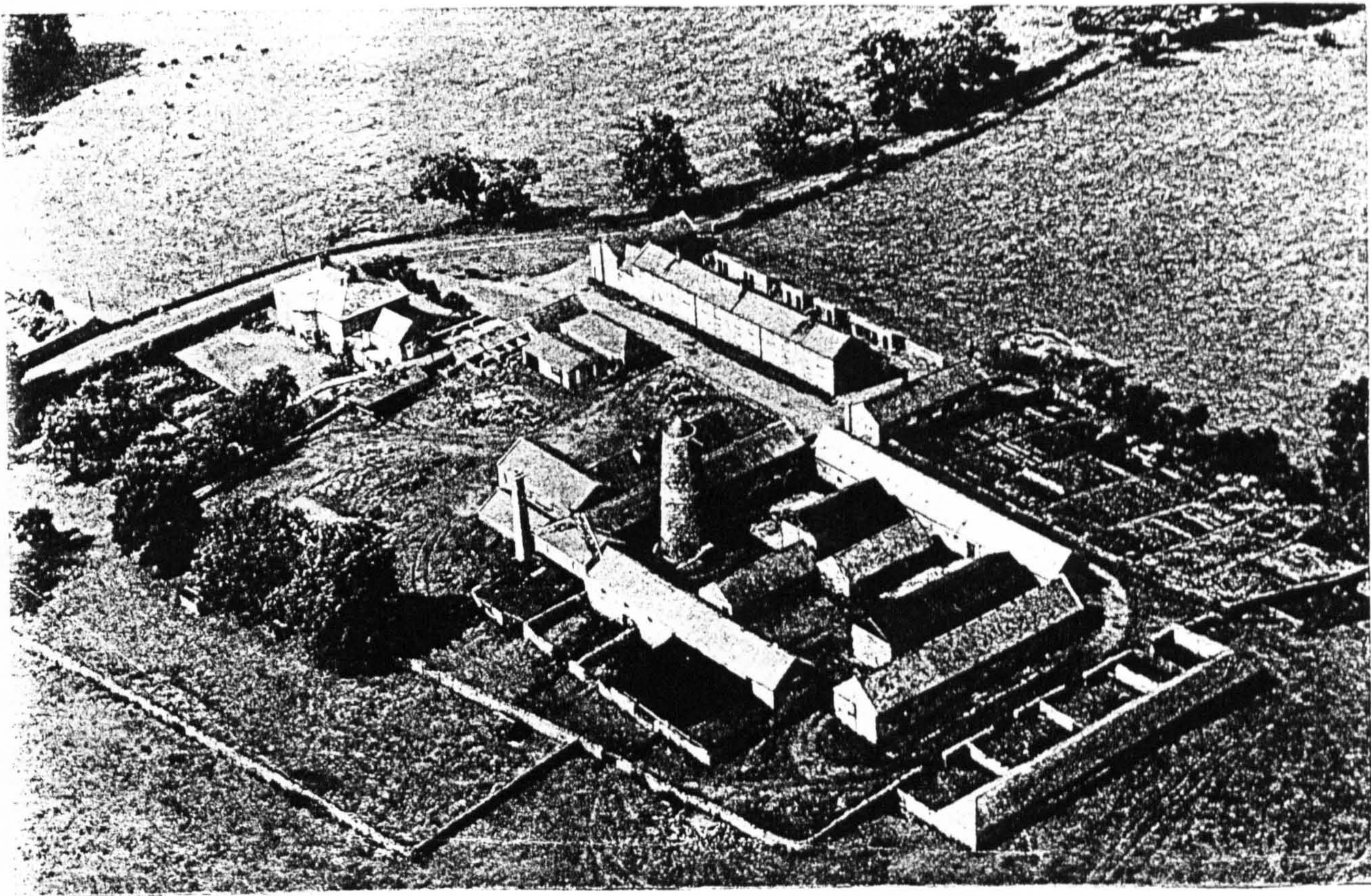
National trends were largely reflected by survey results in the Pennines, with 56% of conversions being to residential use (fig. 6.8). Although in comparison with other sources this figure is rather low. For example, in Tynedale District 88% of applications for farm building conversions since 1981 had been for residential use, while the survey of LPAs indicated that 72% of permitted developments had been for residential use. Watkins and Winter recorded a figure of 73% in the districts of Cotswold, Boothferry and West Devon between 1977 and 1987 (1988). Such differences in data can be partly explained by geography and partly by the contrasts between the numbers of developments applied for and those permitted. Data shows that a relatively high percentage of planning applications for residential conversion are refused.

Data for the number of conversions can be misleading as there is considerable variation in the number of units per case. Figure 6.9 shows increasing numbers of applications for residential conversions in Tynedale District since 1981. However figure 6.10 reveals that as well as increased numbers of applications the scale of applications has also increased, from a mean size of 1.2 units per application in 1981, to 3.2 units per application in 1990. The 1990 average included 6 applications involving 4 or more residential units. Obviously larger proposals are likely to have a far greater impact on rural areas than individual barn conversions. The trend towards larger schemes, if maintained, should be an important consideration in policy making. As the physical and socio-economic impact of conversions almost invariably rises in proportion to the scale of the conversion.

A good example of large scale conversion comes from Tynedale District which was required to determine a planning application for the conversion of a whole farmstead into 8 residential units. Most commentators agree that such high density conversions can seriously damage the conservation value of buildings. The main problem is the



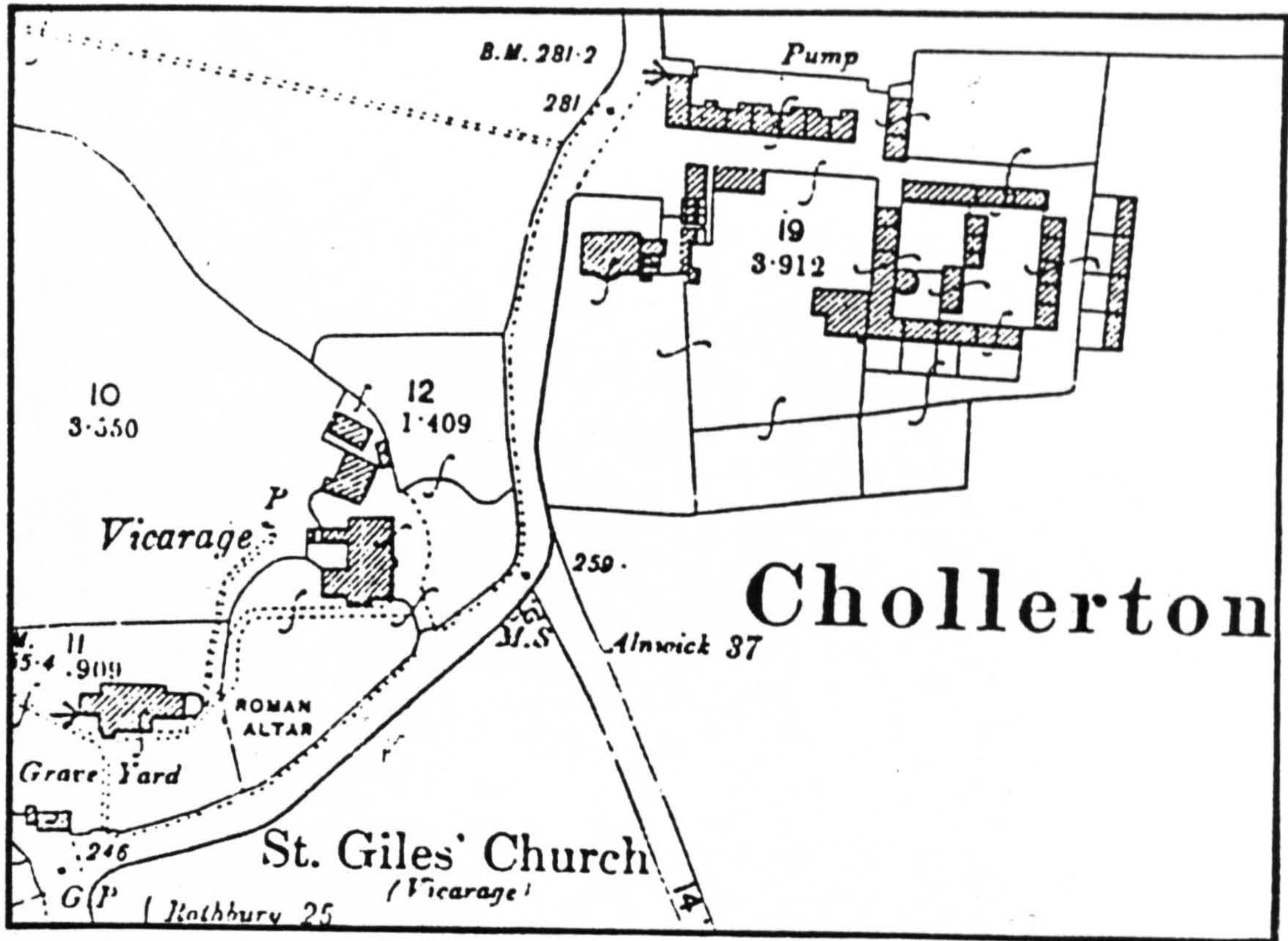
Plate 6.4 Proposed Residential Conversion at Chollerton in  
Northumberland (NY 933 721)



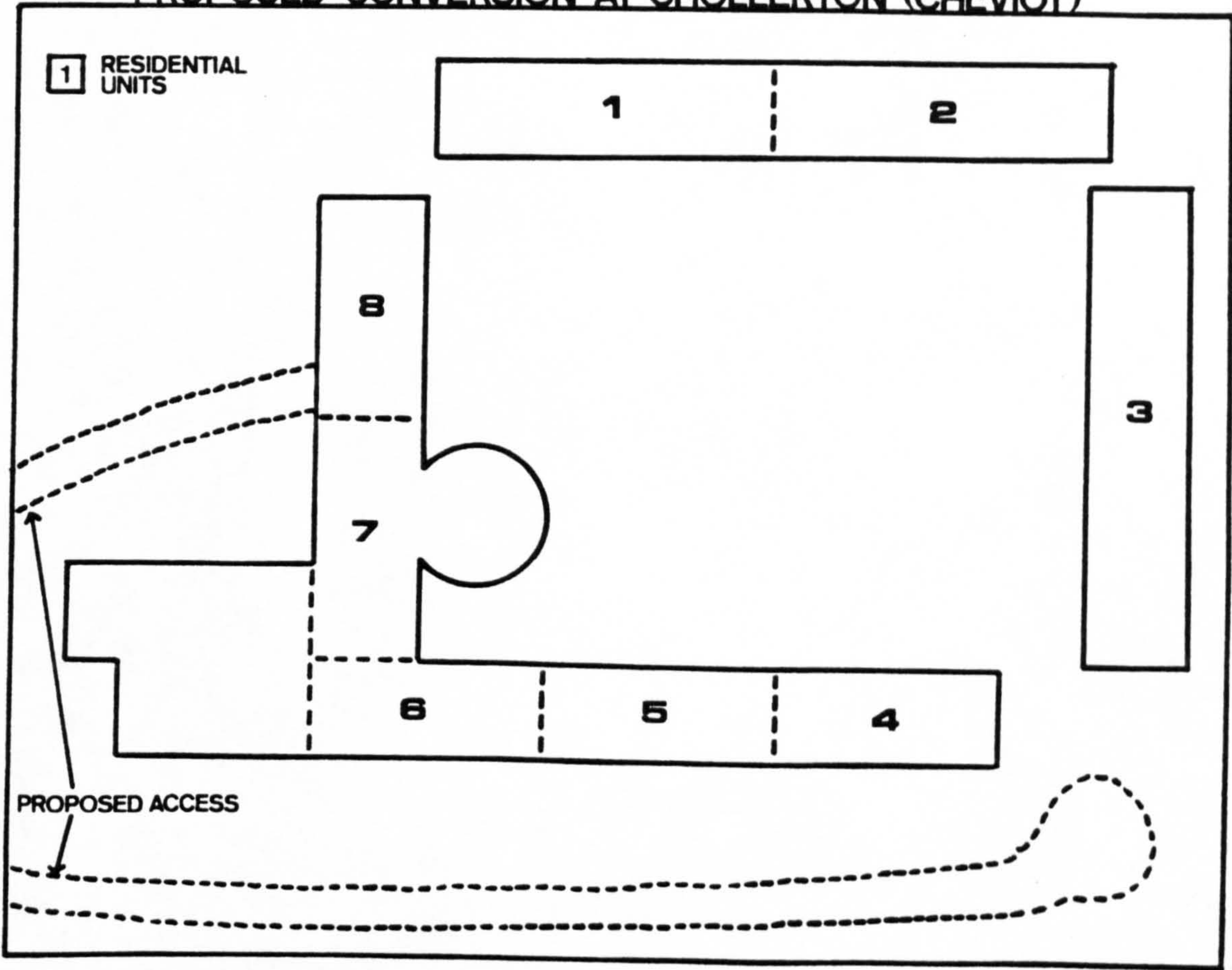
Source: Allsop and Clarke, 1969.



Map 6.1 Proposed Residential Conversion at Chollerton in Northumberland (NY 933 721)



PROPOSED CONVERSION AT CHOLLERTON (CHEVIOT)





duplication of domestic paraphernalia (3) such as gardens and parking areas. Such features are visually intrusive in what is largely open countryside. Built on a hill top site to a courtyard design, the farm was stone built and listed as a grade 2 building. Conversion would have a major visual impact on the surrounding countryside. In addition it would significantly change the social structure of the area, as it could virtually double the population of the adjacent hamlet of Chollerton (NY 933 721), as outsiders migrate into the area (map 6.1).

#### **6.5.1.2 Case Studies**

##### **Unthank Farm (NZ 041 545)**

This development typified some of the large scale conversions, which are becoming increasingly common (fig. 6.10). Situated adjacent to the A68, 15 kilometres west of Newcastle upon Tyne, the farmstead stands in open countryside. During conversion the land was separated from the farmstead, leaving only 1.5 hectares under ownership. Conversion of the entire farmstead in 1988 led to the creation of 5 two-storey 'prestige homes'. These high quality homes, within the North Pennines AONB, were clearly not aimed at a low cost local housing market (Plates 6.5, 6.6).

##### **East Halton (SD 043 539) (Yorkshire Dales)**

In 1988 the manager of the Bolton Abbey estate Inn converted a barn into a high class family dwelling in the village of East Halton. The project was undertaken as a partnership with the estate, who owned the barn. Conversion preserved the large arched doorway and many other features of the original barn (plate 6.2). The location on the western periphery of the village overcame potential planning problems which could be associated with more isolated developments.



Plate 6.5 Residential Conversion at Unthank Farm in the North Pennines (NZ 041 545)



Plate 6.6 An Illustration of the Scale of the Conversion at Unthank Farm





### 6.5.2 Tourist Accommodation

Conversion to tourist accommodation can be divided into a number of categories, based on the facilities provided and the style of operation:

Bunkhouse and Camping Barn (7)

Bed and Breakfast

Self Catering

Hotel

These differences between these options raise a number of issues. The amount of physical change associated with conversion will usually be greater as the level of service rises, i.e. a hotel will usually require more extensive alterations than a Camping Barn or Bunkhouse (compare plates 6.8 and 6.9).

The level of servicing required varies between the different categories, the obvious distinction being between self-catering and the fully serviced schemes. In turn this has implications for the workload and skills required. Evidence suggests that the workload necessitated by hotel and large scale bed and breakfast ventures, largely precludes the continuation of traditional family farm activity. The type and scale of development can have profound implications for the rest of the farm business, raising questions over the justification of some conversions.

The choice of tourist accommodation, also has financial implications. Camping barns are relatively cheap to develop. For instance conversion costs for the Peak District Camping Barns averaged about £3508 (CC 1986 p31). The initial investment for higher class accommodation like hotels is obviously much greater, but equally the returns on investment are likely to be higher. To illustrate, one farmer described the profits from bed and breakfast as "pin money" (Passman 1990 p33). Whereas Bishop Fields Farm Hotel (6.5.2.1) supports a whole family.



Tourist accommodation is a popular conversion option but it relies on a volatile market which varies in space and time. Some areas have fewer tourism opportunities. For example one South Pennines farmer commented that "There is a definite possibility of tourist development in some areas, but not yet in my valley". In other areas respondents expressed the view that the market was approaching saturation point, although evidence suggested that there was always room for high quality developments.

The decision to drop tourist accommodation from the Farm Diversification Scheme (FDS)(MAFF 1991) is a further indication that tourist conversions are not wholly successful. The scale of investment needed is too great for many hill farmers. Low incomes preclude risk taking and many farmers stated that they would be unwilling to develop on borrowed money.

#### **6.5.2.1 Case Studies**

Conversion to tourist accommodation was a relatively common option chosen by Pennine farmers (fig 6.8). However this still only accounted for 5% of all respondents.

Data indicates the main types of accommodation were holiday homes and self-catering facilities, in other words developments requiring little servicing.

#### **Clark House Camping Barn (SD 617 436) (South Pennines)**

This camping barn was opened in May 1990 as part of a network of barns being jointly developed by the YHA, Countryside Commission and ADAS (9). Located on

the southern fringes of the Forest of Bowland, Clark House Farm was a 40 hectare, owner occupied dairy farm. Formerly a stable/ hayloft, the stone built, slate roofed barn adjoins the farmyard, enabling services to be easily laid on. The close proximity of the Bowland hills formed a major attraction to outdoor enthusiasts, who were envisaged as the main users (MAFF 1989c p8).

The project received support through the FDS, with a feasibility study conducted by ADAS preceding development. The study concluded that the greatest drawback with the barn was the small profit margins. At the recommended price of £1.75 per person per night it was estimated that it would take 13 years to show a return on the investment of £8000. As a result there was a recommendation that profit margins needed to be increased by reducing costs or increasing overnight fees. Administration of the barn was to be through a centralised booking service run by the YHA. As a result labour requirements from the farm were minimal (2 hours per week). A fuller budget can be found in appendix F.

#### Ryehill Farm (NY 958579)(15) (North Pennines) (plate 6.7)

The farm was situated on the B6306 some 20 km west of Newcastle, in an isolated location near the village of Slaley. Ryehill Farm has undergone a phased development of tourist accommodation. In 1987 a cowbyre/ feedstore was converted to form Bed and Breakfast accommodation for up to 17 people. A second phase of development in 1990 converted the remaining farmyard buildings into self- catering accommodation for up to 9 people.

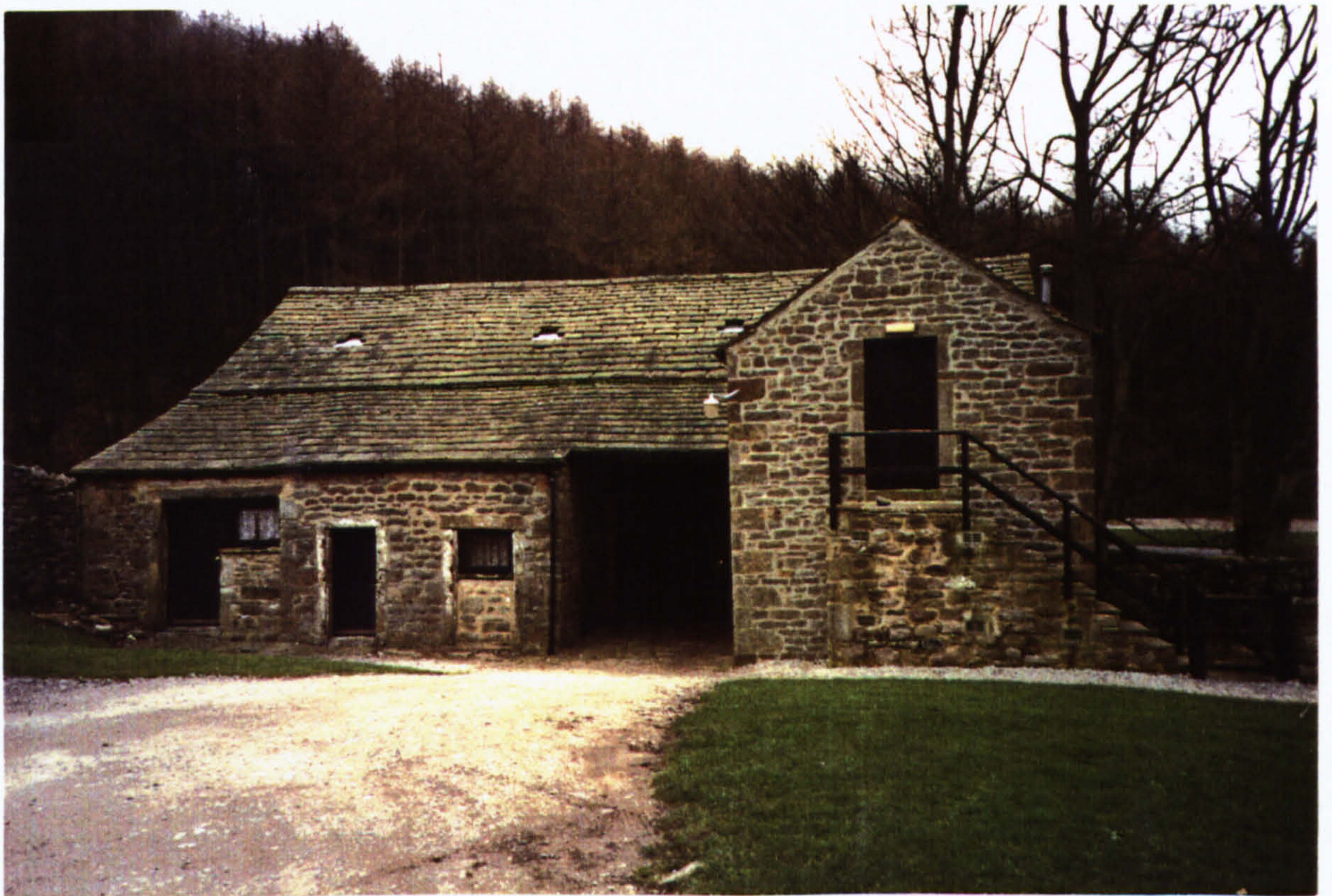
Conversion was assisted by 25% grants from the RDC, with additional assistance through the FDS. Total costs were about £100 000. Few planning problems were encountered, as the isolated location combined with service availability, good access



Plate 6.7 Conversion to Bed and Breakfast and Self-catering  
Accommodation at Ryehill Farm in the North Pennines  
(NY 958 579)



Plate 6.8 Conversion of a Former Barn to Bunkhouse  
Accommodation on the Bolton Abbey Estate  
in the Yorkshire Dales (SE 052 575)





and parking facilities, meant that the site was suitable for conversion. The only real planning condition was that "external materials ... shall match in colour, size shape and texture those of the existing building". Redundancy was claimed on the basis of a lack of tractor access, rendering the buildings unsuitable for modern farm use.

Since conversion the farm, which is owner occupied, has shrunk from 200 acres to 30 acres, such that the farming operation is now very much of secondary importance and in many ways functions as a tourist attraction. As the brochure states, a stay "gives the visitor a unique opportunity to see life on a small working farm".

The administration of the Bed and Breakfast business is by individual marketing and advertising and through the local branch of the Farm Holiday Bureau (16). The Self-Catering section is run through a national agency (17). This arrangement increases the potential market and reduces paperwork, but obviously at the price of a commission, commonly around 25%. The accommodation is usually fully booked from May to August, with occupancy rates having risen from 17.3% of available bednights in 1988, to an estimated 45% in 1990.

This is a high class and large scale development, run in a professional manner by a proprietor with catering experience. The justification for development was the need to support a family on a small owner occupied farm. However development has largely been at the expense of the farming side of the business.



Bishop Field Farm Hotel (NY 826565) (18) (North Pennines) (plates 6.9, 6.10, 6.11)

The 18th century farm of Bishop Field lies in the Allendale Valley, some 10 miles SW of Hexham. The farm was an 80 hectare, owner occupied, livestock holding. During the 1980's financial problems became severe, prompting the farmer to conclude that the farm was "always going to struggle in the present climate of farming." (Llewellyn 1986 p25).

The farm had run a small scale Bed and Breakfast business since 1978, but the farmers felt they were just "playing at it" (Ibid.). In 1985 a decision was taken to convert the cow byre (which was not redundant) into tourist accommodation, the work taking only 9 weeks to complete. The speed of conversion was a critical factor in debt financing.

Three years later the second phase of development took place converting a former milking parlour, piggery and stable, into a dining room, kitchen and lounge, with bedrooms upstairs. By 1988 the development had become a fully fledged hotel, with catering and dining no longer being in the farmhouse. Correspondingly the scale of operation has become quite large with 11 ensuite bedrooms and associated kitchen, dining room and lounge. The enterprise provides employment for two full-time and 16 part-time staff.

Grant aid was obtained from the Rural Development Commission and the English Tourist Board in conjunction with a substantial bank loan. Total conversion costs were around £180 000 with 43% of the first phase being paid for via grant aid. Practical help has also been utilised, with the RDC providing design advice and local builders and artists being employed.



Plate 6.9 Former Cow Byre Converted to Hotel Accommodation at  
Bishop Field Farm Hotel in the North Pennines  
(NY 826 565)



Plate 6.10 Former Milking Parlour, Piggery and Stable  
Converted into a Dining Room, Kitchen, Lounge  
and Bedrooms at Bishop Field Farm Hotel





Conversion did not create any planning problems, save for standard design conditions. However the cost of complying with fire regulations was estimated at £4000. Recognition of the quality of the development has come through the receipt of two CLA 'Farm Building Awards'(19), and being voted 'best hotel in Northumberland' in 1989.

Most guests are tourists but the hotel also caters for special interest groups. It offers its own shooting and fishing rights, not to mention the opportunities for outdoor pursuits in the surrounding countryside. Recent expansion into the conference trade has necessitated the development of special facilities, such as helicopter landing rights. The hotel presently hosts an average of 1 conference per month.

Advertising is through tourist literature such as Egon Ronay and 'Which'. The conference trade is generated by advertising in business magazines and by targeted mail shots. Casual trade is virtually non-existent. The hotel is fully booked from mid-April to mid-October, with shooting and conferences generating valuable off-peak trade. The emphasis on positive marketing and advertising are seen by the owners as crucial to the success of the business. In such a remote region, casual trade cannot provide sufficient business. This conclusion is likely to apply to most of the Pennines. Balanced against this the aggressive marketing and advertising strategy requires a considerable labour input, raising implications for the rest of the farm business.

Managing Bishop Field has become a full-time job for the owners, such that farming has ceased and the land has been sold. For this reason the development cannot be regarded as a way of supporting the farm business (a major aim of national diversification policy). The scale of the operation has taken over the farm, to the extent that in autumn 1990 consideration was being given to the idea of converting the farmhouse and building a new family home elsewhere. This would be a major step for a life long farming family and indicates the type of commitment needed to make a

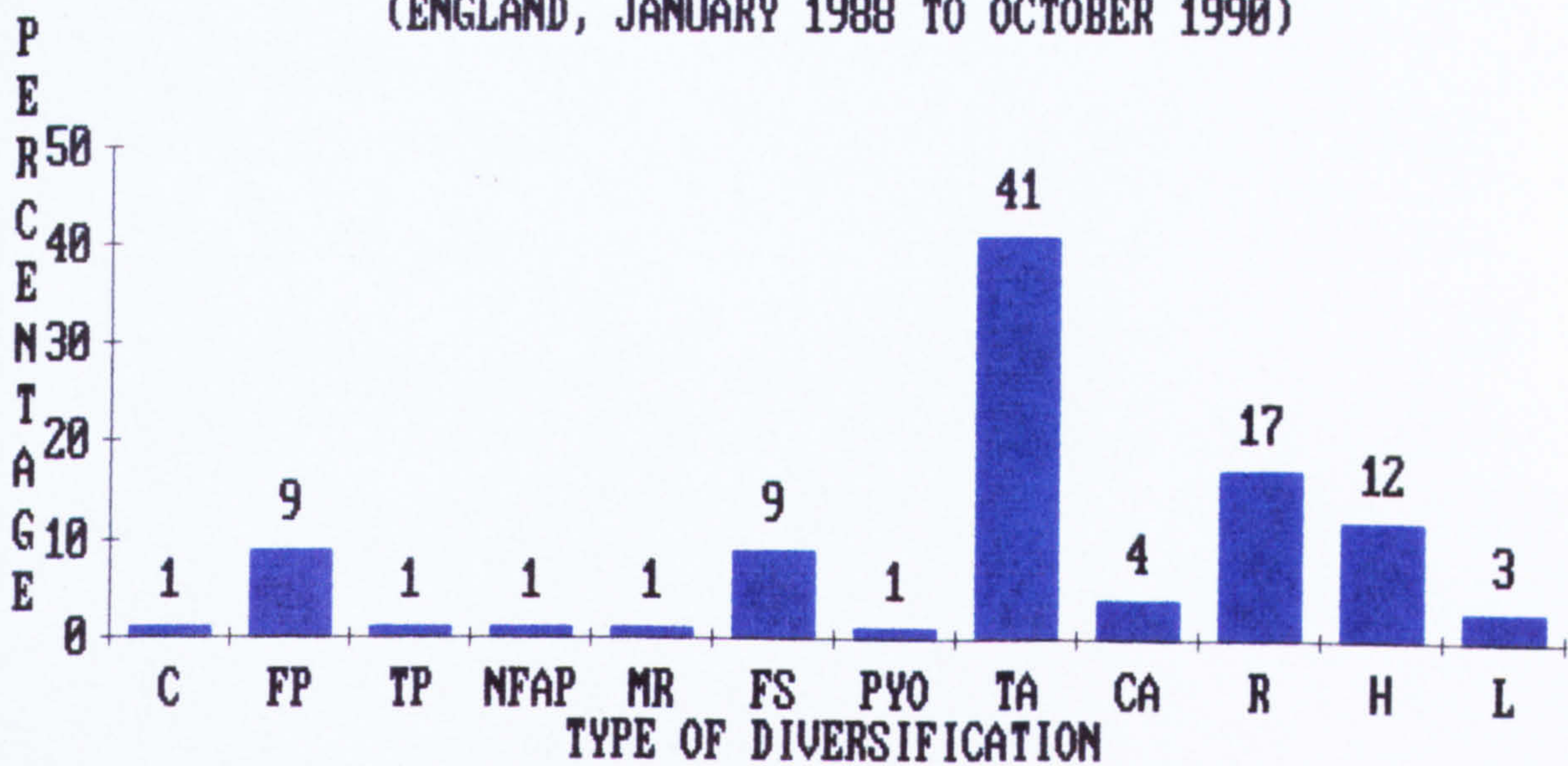


Plate 6.11 The Lounge in a Former Cow Byre at Bishop Field Hotel



FIGURE 6.11

FDS APPROVED SCHEMES  
(ENGLAND, JANUARY 1988 TO OCTOBER 1990)



C = craft  
P = food processing  
TP = timber processing  
NFAP = non-food agricultural  
produce  
MR = machinery repair  
FS = farm shop

PYO = Pick your own  
TA = tourist accommodation  
CA = catering  
R = recreation  
H = horses  
L = letting



full-time living out of conversion enterprises. The scale of investment of capital and labour makes this sort of development an unviable proposition for many farmers. In addition, farmers often lack the business skills and motivations needed to run such a hotel, although at Bishop Field no one had prior training in hotel management. Thus similar latent potential probably exists elsewhere, given the necessary motivation. However conversions also raise a number of difficulties as the owner stated: "There are times when I wake up in the middle of the night and wonder what I've done. Should I be back trying to make a go of the farm?" (Llewellyn 1986 p25)

Despite such concerns, Bishop Field hotel has proved to be a profitable enterprise, generating local jobs and helping to give old farm buildings a new use. It has also filled a niche in the market. As John Owen of the Northumbria Tourist Board commented, the hotel "represented a unique service in that area and a furthering of standards of accommodation." (Stacey 1986 p163).

### 6.5.3 Conversion for Business Use

Business conversions are often given a high profile and promoted as a panacea to rural problems. But on a practical basis they often involve large investments of labour and capital and a considerable element of 'risk'. In addition it can take many years to generate a return on the initial investment. For these reasons they may not be a viable option for many farmers.

Research suggested that it possible to identify a division between individual enterprises and larger workshop complexes. The former tend to be associated with family farms while the latter were more common on the large estates. When considering the opportunities for farm diversification it is clear that almost any business enterprise could in theory, involve conversion.



Only five respondents in the Pennine survey had carried out business conversions and three of these were closely related to tourist enterprises. In view of these findings it has to be concluded that this type of development is not as widespread as is often assumed. In order to undertake adequate research in this area it was necessary to target known examples.

Data from the Farm Diversification Scheme was also used as a method of studying the major types of non-residential conversion (both business and tourist accommodation)(appendix G). Figure 6.11 shows the most common approved schemes between 1988 and October 1990 in England. Many of the schemes did not involve conversion, but the fact that tourist accommodation (41%) is the most common type of development indicates that a significant number did, perhaps around 20% (20).

#### 6.5.3.1 Case Studies

Pilsey Workshops (SK 243 708) (Peak), Milkhope Centre (NZ 217 762) (Cheviot) and Matfen Hall (NZ 032 717) (Cheviot)

The Pilsey workshops were located in a converted stable block, on the Chatsworth Estate in Derbyshire. Stone built in a courtyard plan, the largely single storey buildings dated from 1910 and were planned rather than being vernacular (plate 6.12).

In 1987 the estate converted the buildings into a farmshop (plate 6.13) and workshop complex. Tenants included an artists studio, pottery design and coffee shop. The farmshop was run directly by the estate and occupied the prime location in the old barn, adjacent to car parking facilities and the A619 road. The shop acted as a magnet drawing people towards the workshops. Being part of the estate, the development benefited from integrated roadside advertising and reciprocal advertising at other attractions on the estate. The shop itself sold estate produce and a range of locally and



Plate 6.12 Workshops in Former Stables at Pilsey in the Peak District (SK 243 708)



Plate 6.13 Farm Shop in the Barn of the Pilsey Stables, with the Ample Car Parking Clearly Visible





nationally produced 'country products'. Thus it supported local employment, such as on the estate dairy.

Similar workshop complexes existed at Blagdon (plate 6.15) and Matfen (plate 6.14) in Northumberland. Both were associated with large estates and country houses. At Blagdon the Milkhope Centre was a former 'model' dairy farm dating from 1865, which had been converted by the Blagdon estate into workshops. Total conversion costs were £60 000 with a grant of £12 300 coming from the RDC. Structural work included roof and gutter repairs, re-pointing and the addition of new windows and doors. The development of 30 units necessitated the construction of a car park and landscaping to soften the impact. The quality of the conversion was recognised by the receipt of a CLA farm buildings award. Tenants have included; soft furnishings, chain saws, aluminium gutters, taxidermy, cane furniture, foods, jewellery, furniture, glazing, joinery and a design studio (Wilkinson 1987). Situated only 8km north of Newcastle upon Tyne within 1km of the A1, the site had ready access to markets and the possibility of attracting casual trade through comprehensive roadside advertising.

Matfen workshops were situated 6 km NE of Corbridge (Northumberland) in an isolated position away from main visitor routes. The workshops themselves were in the outbuildings of a large country house. Built to a courtyard pattern the single storey buildings were of stone construction with slate roofs. Very little alteration work seemed to have been necessary during conversion, although new doorways had been added. Car parking was within the courtyard. Combined with the inward looking perspective of the buildings this meant that the impact on the surrounding landscape was limited. In total 11 workshops had been created with help from the RDC, including a design studio and craft shop.



Plate 6.14 Matfen Workshops in Northumberland (Cheviot)  
(NZ 032 717)



Plate 6.15 Workshops in a Former Dairy Farm at the Milkhope  
Centre in Northumberland (Cheviot) (NZ 217 762)





### Storiths (SE 081 543) (Dales)

Business conversions also occur on an individual farm basis, such as at Storiths where a tenant of the Bolton Abbey estate had converted a 2 storey stone barn, into a cafe. The development took place in 1988 with financial support from the FDS. The tenant carried out all the work himself. The only problem was the provision of parking space. This meant sacrificing pasture land to make a hardened surface (plate 6.3). Situated on a minor road, casual trade was limited. However other estate facilities attracted visitors to the area, to the benefit of trade at Storiths.

### 6.5.4 Other Conversions

There are examples of many other types of conversion although few were encountered in the survey area. Social and community needs have benefited from conversions with barns being used for community halls, for example Lains Barn near Wantage in Oxfordshire (Squires 1982 p20). Most barns in the Pennines would probably not be of adequate size for this option. Other possibilities include art galleries, theatres and museums. The latter have been developed in converted farm buildings at Carvoran (NY 668658), Bywell (NZ 039650) in the Tyne Valley.

## 6.6 Policy Aims and The Realities of Conversion

So far this chapter has discussed the motives and aspirations which lie behind conversion and the practical considerations in the process, conclusions being illustrated by a number of case studies. The remainder of the chapter discusses the relationship between the policy and practice of conversion. It examines the present situation, how it is changing and the likely future position. Only by studying these aspects together is it possible to fully understand the reasons for, and implications of, conversion. A discussion of the various aspects of policy is followed by a comparison with the realities of conversion, drawing on evidence from field investigations.



## 6.6.1 The Main Policy Stances

Five distinct, but overlapping areas of policy making can be identified: central government, development agencies, countryside agencies, and the farming and conservation lobbies. A comparison of these changing policy stances is essential to fully understand present and future developments regarding conservation and conversion.

### 6.6.1.1 Central Government

Government policy on conversion is best understood by taking an historical perspective. Wilkinson defined four stages of government thinking on the subject:

late 1960's - exception made for changes of use of redundant buildings to dwellings  
1974 to  
early 1980's - presumption against new development  
mid 1970's - every effort to find alternative uses  
1980's - more small business conversions (1987 p148)

Recent evidence suggests that some modifications may need to be added to this continuum. The presumption against new development in open countryside has been consistently applied throughout the post war period. However attitudes began to change following the 1985 White Paper 'Lifting the Burden' and the resulting circular 16/87 (DOE 1985 and 1987) which signalled a relaxation of some aspects of development control (table 4.2). Even so circular 16/87 still re-iterated that "the best and most versatile land has special importance and should not be built on" (DOE 1987a p1). Although there continues to be a degree of liberalisation there is still a presumption against irreversible new development on high quality farmland.

Promotion of the 'Enterprise Economy' gave rise to policy changes in the 1980's concerned with encouraging all types of conversion, not just to business use. For



instance, Planning Policy Guidance 7 (PPG7) stressed that "There are often opportunities for re-using existing buildings or adapting them to new commercial, industrial, residential or recreational uses." (DOE 1988a p3). It appears that the emphasis of policy was concentrated on removing obstacles to business conversions.

In the late 1980's and early 1990's, new attitudes are beginning to emerge. There are now calls from conservation groups such as the CPRE, for a tightening up of planning controls in the countryside, although as yet these have mainly gone unheeded by government policy makers. Nevertheless the consultation paper 'Planning Controls Over Agricultural and Forestry Buildings' may herald a shift away from the liberalising trend set in motion by the White Paper 'Lifting the Burden' (DOE 1985, 1990a) and a recognition that 'green' credentials should act as a moderating influence on economic expansion.

Present government policy on conversion is firmly based on the principles of PPG7 that "the best protection for the countryside is a healthy rural economy where enterprise and initiative are permitted and encouraged to thrive" (DOE 1988a p1). This principle was reinforced by section 7.6 of the 1990 environmental white paper 'This Common Inheritance', which stated that "Maintaining a healthy rural economy is one of the best ways of protecting and improving the countryside" (DOE 1990b p96).

To achieve their desired objective the government has pursued a dual policy of encouraging enterprise and diversification while simultaneously 'reforming' the planning system to facilitate the desired developments. All this has taken place within a context of free market politics and the reform of agricultural policies. Simultaneously the environmental movement has become increasingly influential in seeking to define a future based on sustainable development.



Efforts to adapt planning policies to promote enterprise and diversification really began with the White Paper 'Lifting the Burden' and the subsequent circular 16/87 'Development Involving Agricultural Land'. The latter firmly established a linkage between the farm surplus problem (chapter 4) and the development needs of the countryside. The advent of surpluses has been used to give a 'green light' to developments in the countryside. The circulars predecessor (75/76) aimed to "ensure that, as far as possible, land of a higher agricultural quality is not taken for development" (DOE 1976 p1). By contrast the new circular states that "agricultural implications must be considered together with environmental and economic aspects." (DOE 1987a p1). In other words the protection of agriculture is no longer the sole consideration in determining most planning applications.

PPG 2 on 'Green Belts' and PPG4 'Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms' give advice to LPAs which affect conversion schemes. In the former, section 16 promotes the idea of conversions in Green Belts unless there were "specific and convincing" reasons for refusal (DOE 1988b)(Green Belts infringe on the survey area in the vicinity of the Leeds and Manchester conurbations). Section 10 of PPG 4 urges planning authorities to permit conversion on the grounds that it is preferable to dereliction (1988c). The draft PPG7 produced in 1989 saw a further relaxation of planning policy, with the previous insistence on redundancy as a pre-condition for conversion apparently being dropped (DOE 1989).

#### **6.6.1.2 Development Agencies**

The 'development' organisations actively involved in conversion tend to offer few policy statements, but there are exceptions. The ETB document 'Visitors in the Countryside' (1988) highlighted the contribution that tourism could make to rural economies in the light of CAP reforms, stressing the socio-economic benefits available. Although concentrating on practical issues, the RDC has expressed the



view that socio-economic considerations need to be given a higher profile, as the chairman stated:

"We must not allow two visions of the countryside to develop: the green and pleasant land which people visit and fantasize about, and the place where many people live and work and which has to pay for its upkeep." (1989 p1).

The RDC does become involved in on-farm conversion schemes, but stresses that off-farm rural development is more likely to bring the wider socio-economic benefits which are so often attributed to the conversion of TFBs (RDC 1991). Evidence from the case studies would seem to validate this policy stance. Especially in view of the much diminished role of farming in rural communities which was outlined in chapter 4.

The Ministry of Agriculture's advisory service (ADAS) has become increasingly involved with conversion, particularly since the inception of the Farm Diversification Scheme (FDS). The service is involved at the 'grassroots' level on the farm and as such it provides an indication of the changing realities of diversification and conversion. In this context, there has been a perceptible reduction in the early enthusiasm for diversification and conversion which followed the inception of the FDS in 1988. The working of ADAS regarding conversion represents a re-affirmation of the privileged status afforded to agriculture in terms of state support. This seems somewhat at odds with the RDC's call for a move away from farm-based rural development policies. As yet the emphasis of rural development policies still seems to be farm-based, at least in terms of financial assistance.

#### 6.6.1.3 Countryside Agencies

The Countryside Commission has been particularly active in the policy field. The Commission has worked on the principle that the best protection for the countryside is a healthy rural economy and advised government accordingly. Almost from its



formation in 1968 the Commission has been attempting to reconcile farming and environmental needs. There are some differences with central government policy. For example the Commission's Northern Regional Officer felt that there was a need for a greater commitment to conservation as an end in itself, rather than seeing it as a desirable consequence of free market policies (21). In this context, section 9 of PPG 7 identified a "need to protect the countryside for its own sake" indicating that government and commission policies are moving closer together. The Commission have expressed concern over the governments commitment to business conversions, fearing that "a growth in semi-industrial activity, or an expansion of hitherto appropriate enterprises to a significantly larger scale, can erode the tranquillity of the countryside." (CC 1989b p15).

Although favouring a balance between development and conservation, if faced with a choice, the Commission's view is that "the countryside must come first", a philosophy which applies equally to conversion (CC 1989b p8).

#### **6.6.1.4 Farming Lobby**

The farming industry has adopted a typically pragmatic approach to conversion. Seeing the inevitability of farm policy reforms, policies have undergone a dramatic reversal to embrace the idea of stewardship and environmental subsidies. The farming industry has not only been a recipient of new policy initiatives but also has actively sought to influence the reform of policy. As such, the CLA has produced several policy documents, most notably, the Gretton report, 'Maintaining Income From Land' (1985) and the Greenwell Report 'Enterprise in the Rural Environment' (1989a). The latter explored the links between planning and the new countryside, proposing that non-residential conversions should enjoy permitted development rights, but that all new farm buildings should be subject to planning approval on siting and design. The report also proposed a system of environmental payments to farmers through a



national 'Environmental Land Management Scheme', an idea with implications for the future of TFBs, and one which seems destined for wider adoption.

The National Farmers Union has taken the view that "farm diversification is not the panacea for the ills of the farming community" (McLaughlin 1989 p4). More than any other organisation the NFU reflects the views of the farming community and as such adds an important dimension to policy debates. McLaughlin voiced the fear that "We may be reaching the end of that tranche of agricultural buildings whose environmental qualities are such as to easily accept their conversion." (Ibid)

#### **6.6.1.5 Conservation Lobby**

The conservation lobby has become increasingly vocal in its opposition to the worst excesses of conversion. The government's stated intention of encouraging business conversions found broad approval but attitudes have changed as the reality of conversions became clear. In 1988 the CPRE commissioned the report 'Superb Conversions' which concluded that; "The biggest problem is that the most lucrative and frequent new use for farm buildings, residential use, is probably the least likely to satisfy the 5 objectives" (Watkins and Winter 1988 p44). The '5 objectives' were: jobs, affordable housing, higher farm incomes, conservation and diversification. The CPRE has become increasingly vociferous in its calls for the introduction of planning controls on all farm buildings (CPRE 1990b) and in its attempts to prevent abuse of permitted development rights on farm workers houses (CPRE 1990c). Specifically on conversion, the CPRE feel that there is a need for policy to distinguish between residential and other end uses. As their Chief Planning Officer explained:

"If the Government's policy on farm building conversions is to address the real problems of declining farm incomes and rural deprivation while protecting the countryside from damaging development, then it will have to be far more selective in its approach" (Burton 1990 p5).



English Heritage entered the conversion debate in 1990 with the publication of their policy statement, 'The Conversion of Historic Farm Buildings' (table 4.2). Its main conclusion was that "the design of farm buildings and the needs of residential use tend to be incompatible" (1990 p3). A conclusion which is largely supported by field evidence in the Pennines. The document challenges the widely held view that conversion is a way of conserving buildings, urging that there should be "a strong general presumption against residential conversions of listed farm buildings" (p3). Because English Heritage act as official advisers to government on historic buildings the report carries weight, but so far it has not been used as the basis of specific new guidance from central government. Nevertheless the policy statement could herald a shift to a more restrictive policy on residential conversion.

Other conservation organisations and pressure groups have been actively involved with farm building conversion, for example the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB). Local conservation groups, such as the 'Friends of the Lake District' have become active in opposing specific schemes (Jones 1990).

## **6.6.2 The Realities of Conversion**

Having investigated the various policy stances, there is a need to consider the extent to which the aims and aspirations relate to the reality of policy and practice as seen in the Pennines. Two issues need to be considered. Firstly, the extent to which national planning guide-lines have been interpreted at the local level, and secondly, how this has been reflected by evidence on the ground.

### **6.6.2.1 Local Implementation of National Planning Policy Guidance**

Evidence suggests that considerable variations exist in the interpretation and application of policy at the local level. One measure of the commitment of LPAs to conversion is the extent to which they deal with the question in development plans



and other policy documents. In this context 76% of Pennine LPAs had specific policies on conversion in their development plans. Thus there appears to be a broad recognition of the importance of the subject.

The production of specific policy notes and guidance dealing with conversion indicates that a special interest is attached to conversion by certain authorities. Only 48% of LPAs had issued such guidance but many of these touched on the issue of conversion only as part of a wider subject include Calderdale M.B.C. Planning Policy Notes 2 and 3 on 'green belts' and 'other rural areas'. These sorts of policy notes do not compare with the detailed guidance offered by, for example, Richmondshire District Council (1984) whose 'Alternative Uses for Redundant Field Barns' gives detailed information on the criteria for conversion, design and wider considerations. For example, alterations should have "chimneys at ridge level, sash windows, doors of typical residential pattern, white paintwork.". This emphasis is not really surprising given the high concentration of redundant farm buildings in the area (chapter 5).

It can be concluded that LPAs do show a response to local circumstances and to variations on the ground, something which Watkins and Winter considered as vital: "it is essential that planning authority policies towards conversions take account of local variations in building tradition" (1988 p47). Local planning authorities were asked how government policy changes had affected local planning policy regarding conversion. In response 43% stated that they had become more sympathetic. Examples included Craven D.C. who considered that the adoption of the main ideas of PPG7 into their local plans signalled a policy shift.

Another indicator of commitment was what authorities considered to be the most important factor in conversions. The majority (67%) saw conservation as the most important aspect of conversion. No respondents felt that the socio-economic aspects were the most important consideration. This is at variance with a government policy



which has increasingly stressed socio-economic considerations (DOE 1988a p3). Only 6 out of 21 LPAs listed 'non agricultural, non residential' conversions as the most favoured end use. Again this is not in keeping with government policy which has aimed to encourage enterprise and business (DOE 1988a).

In keeping with government guide-lines most authorities stated that they would oppose conversions if "major changes" were proposed. On the other hand the most recent DOE statements suggest that government policy has moved even further down the 'conversion path'. In commenting on conversions the draft PPG on 'The Countryside and the Rural Economy' circulated in December 1989 stated that: "planning authorities should also recognise that new and imaginative styles can make a positive contribution to the rural landscape." (DOE 1989 p18).

The survey confirmed that LPAs possessed a knowledge of the 'new initiatives'. However the uptake of policies varied. Some councils expressed reservations about government policy which were seen as "too vague" (22). Tynedale District Planning Authority expressed the feeling that policy had been formulated to suit South East England, with its greater development pressure and less durable building stock (23). The feeling was that national policies had limited application in the Pennines and that policy should be formulated locally.

The farming community demonstrated a degree of fatalism in expressing opinions about the chances of conversion schemes being granted planning permission. As one Peak farmer exclaimed "how do you cut the red tape?". In total 54% of Pennine farmers felt that planning controls were a constraint on conversion. Representatives of the farming community were far more optimistic, having greater knowledge of recent policy initiatives. The Duke of Northumberland's agent even went as far as suggesting that "it did not matter what local planning authorities said", as government policy virtually ensured success on appeal (4).



### 6.6.2.2 The Practice of Conversion

A comparison between the Pennine survey and other available data gives an idea of the real situation as opposed to that postulated by government (table 6.2).

The figures shown in table 6.2 demonstrate the predominance of residential conversions. The comparison also suggests the importance of regionality, with a high percentage of tourist accommodation in the Pennines compared with the national level, indicating the importance of tourism throughout much of the region. Such conclusions are reinforced at the national level, with Hill (1985) finding that 93% of farms offering tourist accommodation were in the 'uplands and grasslands'. The question is whether the abundance of farm tourism in the uplands is merely a spatial relationship, with the farms happening to be located in an area of high tourist potential, or whether the farming systems actively enhance the environment and thereby stimulate the tourist industry (chapter 8).

In a similar way, the relative importance of business conversions in the CPRE survey indicates the greater opportunities available in the more 'developed' lowland areas. A situation which was reflected in many parts of the survey area, for example Burnley District, an area of 'high' population density and existing industry, had a higher than average amount of business conversion (29%).

The Pennine survey revealed a relatively low percentage of residential conversions, compared to the national level (table 6.2). This could be a consequence of the abnormally high levels of conversion for tourist accommodation but is more likely to stem from the nature of the survey. The data for the Pennines came directly from farmers. Information obtained from a number of Pennine LPAs indicated a far higher level of residential conversion: 87% in both South Lakeland and Pendle Districts and



**Table 6.2                      Actual Conversion (%)**

Source	Residential	Tourist Accommodation	Business
Pennines	56	24	20
CPRE	79	6	15
Watkins/ Winter	73	17	7

**Table 6.3                      Potential Conversion (%)**

Source	Residential	Tourist Accommodation	Business
Pennines	46	32	22
Hill: uplands	44	80	95
Hill: national	38	43	29

N.B. The Pennines is the authors research project carried out in 1990. The CPRE survey counted conversions on a national basis between 1985 and May 1990 (CPRE 1990a). Watkins and Winter analysed data from West Devon, Cotswold and Boothferry Districts, between 1977 and 1986 (Watkins and Winter 1988). Hill surveyed 280 TFB's through-out England and Wales to assess their potential for conversion (Hill 1985).



88% in Tynedale District. The difference can be explained by the fact that planning authority data included conversions by off-farm developers. This in itself indicates that many farmers have been pursuing the option of selling unconverted barns, usually with the benefit of planning permission. The immediate realisation of capital and the limited labour input involved make this an attractive proposition for many farmers and confirms the conclusion of Watkins and Winter that: "A significant minority of the respondents had sold their buildings to a builder or developer soon after obtaining planning permission" (1988 p46).

A comparison of tables 6.2 and 6.3 indicates the very real discrepancy which exists between the perception and reality of conversion, With Hills (1985) assessment of suitability for conversion being a complete reversal of reality. Data for potential conversion in the Pennines suggests a similar, if less pronounced, emphasis on non-residential conversion, perhaps a reflection on the more pragmatic approach of farmers. The discrepancy between actual and potential conversion suggests that economic and business reality is the main driving force behind current trends in conversion. There is an apparent dichotomy between the perceptions and reality of conversion which needs to be addressed if conversion is to become the desirable outcome that is envisaged by most interested parties involved with TFBs.

## 6.7 Summary

The rate of conversion has been increasing due to a number of factors. Environmentally, conversion has been seen as a way of saving historic buildings from dereliction. The process has been encouraged by government policies aimed at diversifying the rural economy, both for ideological reasons (decreased state subsidy and more private enterprise), and as a means of reducing conventional farm support.



The principle of business-led conversions in a diversified, enterprise orientated rural economy, has received widespread support, although there were initial concerns over the relaxation of policies when these were outlined in 'Lifting the Burden' and in PPG7. Moving into the 1990's the consensus on conversion (if it ever existed) has begun to break down, as the realities of conversion have become clear. The major problem has been the discrepancy between the vision, as outlined in PPG7, and the realities of conversion. Opposition to the worst excesses of conversion has been growing on a local and national basis. Concerns over design, social implications and loss of amenity have now reached the stage where some planning authorities are taking the view that dereliction may be preferable to residential conversions. For example, the Draft Lake District National Park Plan states that "decay can be preferable to conversion" (Lake District Special Planning Board 1990 p41), while the Yorkshire Dales National Park Committee has restricted residential conversions by introducing a policy which stipulates that in most areas of the park housing developments, including conversions, must meet a local need (1989 p2).

Future conversion policy seems likely to be more discriminatory, seeking to target specific types of scheme, principally business conversions. The English Heritage policy statement advises that "planning authorities should always consider whether agricultural, commercial, or community uses are feasible before contemplating residential conversions." (1990 p3). The problem is that it is questionable whether it is open to planning authorities to consider alternatives when determining a planning application on its individual merits.



There is a pressing need for high quality design if conversions are to become more acceptable. Despite growing pressure, government has tended to oppose the involvement of planning authorities design considerations. As one design guide commented:

"The Government has always stressed that planners should not get involved in the finer points of design, but this attitude is inexplicable when it is considered how much the quality of the environment can add to the quality of life." (Murphy and Denny 1990 p11).

Pennine farmers placed a heavy emphasis on the importance of landscape considerations during conversion. In a similar fashion Watkins and Winter concluded that: "very few farmers ... became involved in conversions purely for reasons of income" (1988 p36). Despite these worthy sentiments economic reality is likely to be the major motivating factor in conversion (1), hence the emphasis on residential conversion, with its higher values, rapid return on capital and limited labour input.

Non-residential conversions tend to fall into one of two options. Either, they generate insignificant returns, or the input of labour and capital are so great that the farm business largely ceases to operate, calling into question the validity of conversion. On a national basis McInerney (1989) found that only 20% of diversification enterprises (not just conversions) generated more than 25% of total farm incomes. The conclusion must be that conversion is unlikely to offer financial security to many farmers and that, at best, it is only able to offer modest remuneration to offset losses brought about by market trends and declining levels of state support.

Market intervention is needed to make non-residential options more appealing. Some measures have already been outlined, such as grants and loans. However the scale of the problem necessitates a more comprehensive approach as described in chapter seven.



## Notes to Chapter Six

### 1. Interview

Interview with the agent to the Chatsworth Estate, 14/8/90

### 2. Interview

Interview with Development Control Officer, Yorkshire Dales National Park, 11/10/90.

### 3. Interview

Interview with the CLA Northern Regional Secretary, 2/5/90.

### 4. Interview

Interview with the agent to the Northumberland Estate, 21/8/90.

### 5. Interview

Interview with the agent to the Bolton Abbey Estate, 17/8/90.

### 6. Permitted Development

Under part 6 of the 1988 General Development Order permitted development rights are subject to the following conditions: over 50% of income should come from the farm, land adjacent to the farm should be larger than 0.4 hectares and more than 1100 hours should be worked on the farm per year.

### 7. Camping Barns and Bunkhouse Barns

These are defined in the Countryside Commission documents: 'Accommodation Barns' (1988a) and 'National Minimum Standards for Camping Barns and Bunkhouse Barns' (1988b). The Bunkhouse is more akin to a Youth Hostel having separate bedrooms and a degree of service provision. Camping Barns do not require separate bedrooms and the only services needed are drinking water and a toilet.

### 8. Interview

Interview with the ADAS Northern Regional Enterprise Adviser, 5/9/90.

### 9. Interview

Interview with the Barns Development Officer, 20/3/89. Jointly employed by Countryside Commission and the Youth Hostels Association (YHA). The officer's role is to act as a co-ordinator in establishing a network of Camping Barns throughout northern England.

### 10. Rural Development Areas (RDA)

28 RDA's have been designated since 1984, including most of the Cheviot, North Pennines, Dales and Peak regions. The main benefit to conversion is the availability of a 25% Redundant Buildings Grant from the RDC.



## 11. RDC Grants to Local Authorities

Under the 'Miscellaneous Provisions Act' of 1983. The RDC can give grants of up to 50% to local authorities for workshop development within RDA's.

## 12. Listed Buildings

Successive Town and Country Planning Acts have enabled lists of buildings of 'Special Architectural and Historic Interest' to be prepared. Buildings are classified under one of 3 categories (1,2\*,2). Listed building consent is needed for demolition and alteration of listed buildings, the degree of restriction varying according to the buildings grading. Listing also brings financial benefits with grant aid available from English Heritage under the 1953 Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act. Local Authorities are also empowered to give grants under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

## 13. Conservation Areas

The 1967 Civic Amenities Act empowered local authorities to designate Conservation Areas in towns and villages, with controls on demolition in such areas being introduced in 1974. Under the 1972 Town and Country Planning (Amendment) Act, English Heritage grants are available for building repairs in Conservation Areas. The most recent development has been the application of Conservation Area designation to the open countryside. The relevant legislation has now been consolidated in the 1990 Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act.

## 14. Multiple Grants

Since 1988 National Park Authorities have had a discretionary power to top-up MAFF grants to a level of 80%.

## 15. Interview

Interview with the farmer at Ryehill Farm, 11/7/90.

## 16. The Farm Holiday Bureau

This was originally established as a collaborative venture between ADAS, ETB, Royal Agricultural Society and Farmers Weekly. Now self-supporting it provides a national marketing, regulatory and lobbying function, for over 80 regional groups.

## 17. Holiday Agencies

There are several national and regional holiday letting agencies. Operators pay a fee and are charged commission on bookings. In return they receive nationwide advertising in brochures and centralised booking facilities.

## 18. Interview

Interview with the farmer at Bishop Field Farm, on 3/12/90.

## 19. Farm Buildings Award Scheme

The CLA runs a biennial 'Farm Buildings Award Scheme' which includes conversion. The criteria are: functionality, value for money and conservation value (CLA 1989b p27). Notable winners in the Pennines have been: the Milkhope Centre, Pilsey, and Bishop Field (6.6).



## 20. Proportion of Diversification Involving Conversion

In a nationwide survey of 692 diversifications McInerney and Turner (1991) found that 25% involved capital investment of some sort, which they attributed to farm buildings and fixed equipment, on this basis 20% would seem a reasonable estimate of the proportion of diversifications which involve conversion.

## 21. Interview

Interview with the Countryside Commission Northern Regional Officer, on 23/4/90.

## 22. Interview

Interview with the Development Control Officer for Tynedale District Council, 31/10/90.

## 23. Construction of TFBs

In some areas of southern England, many traditional farm buildings tend to be constructed of less durable materials, such as timber frames and weather boards, mud and wattle.



**Chapter Seven**  
**Conservation**



## 7.1 Setting the Context

The conservation of physical features provides much of the motivation and justification behind the conversion of traditional farm buildings (TFBs). However, conservation is also seen as inherently desirable, the aesthetic ideology having a physical manifestation on the ground. Most existing work fails to distinguish between conservation and conversion. Take the classification by Watkins and Winter, who viewed conservation as just one of many justifications for conversion which included: the provision of employment; supply of rural housing; supporting farm incomes; preserving traditional and historic buildings and encouraging farm diversification and new land uses (1988 p1).

Evidence suggests that a distinction does exist in the minds of those actively involved with TFBs. For example Richmondshire District Council stressed that their questionnaire answers were based on conservation alone while, contrary to popular sentiment, Northumberland National Park felt that there was a need to distinguish between conservation and conversion.

This chapter addresses 3 major questions: the motivation for conservation; the methods used; and the consequences of conservation. The aim is to evaluate the options available, thus providing a framework for a consideration of the central question of 'value' in chapter 8.

## 7.2 A Definition

Expanding on the definitions given in chapter two, conservation is viewed as: the continued use, or change of use, within agriculture. Conservation assumes that the buildings have value in their own right, over and above any use benefits.



It is also possible to identify a preservation option (as outlined in chapter two), whereby buildings are saved even where they do not fulfil an active role. The future of such buildings would be questionable were the free market allowed to operate unchecked. The next section considers the motivations which underlie the conservation process.

### **7.3 Emergence of Farm Building Conservation**

Adopting an historical perspective, it is informative to consider the development of TFB conservation. Formal promotion of building conservation can be traced back to the formation of 'The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings' (SPAB) in 1877. It had its roots in the Victorian preservationist movements, which emphasised the importance of management and efficient use of existing resources. 1895 saw the establishment of the National Trust which later became the largest private owner of TFBs in England and Wales (Lake 1989). This preservationist phase continued into the 20th century, with the establishment of the CPRE in 1926 serving to strengthen the conservation lobby. The effects of recession and two world wars reduced development pressure on TFBs during the first half of the 20th century and enabled a considerable legacy of TFBs to survive. As Woodforde explained: "Sheer adversity is in large measure the ironical reason for this vast legacy" (Woodforde 1983 p3).

The post war period saw the expansion of formal building conservation measures, with the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act introducing the systematic listing of buildings of historic and architectural interest. The 1967 Civic Amenities Act introduced the designation of Conservation Areas. The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission (later to become English Heritage) was established under the 1953 'Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act'. Its remit was to act as government advisers on conservation and to fund works carried out on historic buildings (Cunnington 1984 p55). The role of local authorities was increased by the



1962 Local Authorities (Historic Buildings) Act which enabled local authorities to fund conservation works on historic buildings. Central government has played an increasingly active role in historic building conservation. Initially this was somewhat compromised by post war re-development and, in rural areas, the drive to maximize production. This led to the wholesale destruction of TFBs as modernisation led to replacement by newer structures. Such investment even received positive support from government through the Agricultural Improvement Scheme, until its replacement by the Farm and Conservation Grant Scheme in 1989.

During the 1970's the whole conservation movement expanded rapidly, reacting against the worst excesses of post-war agri-business. Lowe (1983) argued that the 'popularist' conservation movement of the 1970's and 1980's represented a move back towards the Victorian values of stewardship and management. However Pennine landowners argued that they have always adopted sympathetic attitudes, taking the view that: "the estates were the original planners" (1).

The 1980's saw the emergence of conservation as a mainstream political issue, culminating in the comprehensive environmental white paper, 'This Common Inheritance' which demonstrated the governments increasing acceptance of environmental priorities (DOE 1990b).

Turning more specifically to TFBs, Pearce identified an expansion in the conservation movement in the mid 1970's arguing that there was increased interest in "preservation..., conservation and adaptive reuse" (1989 p2). This resulted in the emergence of an increasingly active and radical conservation movement, with newly formed groups such as 'SAVE Britains Heritage' and the 'Historic Farm Buildings Group' being particularly active. In addition, older organisations such as SPAB have continued to take an active interest in TFB conservation. Recognition of their



importance of traditional farm buildings has come through the introduction of the CLA's Farm Buildings Award scheme.

### 7.3.1 The Motives Behind Conservation

A number of motives underlie TFB conservation initiatives. These are essentially the perceived values of TFBs which are considered in chapter 8, a brief summary is given at this juncture.

Keeping future options open by maintaining structures is an important consideration for those seeking to find continuing farm uses. For example, the Dales 'Barns and Walls Conservation Officer' (7.5.2) felt that "investment for the future" was a major motivation for farmers wanting to conserve their barns (2). Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) also saw future options as important considerations in the conservation of farm buildings, for example Tynedale D. C. expressed the view that farm buildings should be conserved because sooner or later the agricultural recession would finish and demand for farm uses would rise again. Conversion now might necessitate the construction of new replacement farm buildings, at a later date, with inevitable consequences for the landscape. Sadly such long term perspectives rarely form the basis of policy and practice relating to conservation and conversion.

The possibility of generating a financial return, either directly from the TFB or from activities carried on inside them, proved to be a particularly strong motivation. In outlining the considerable economic contribution made by historic buildings the Montagu Working Party concluded that: "historic buildings are a major resource and a national asset which ... can meet many of society's most pressing needs" (BTA 1980). It is important to stress that the extent to which conversion is seen as a form of conservation is a crucial issue, and is discussed in the conclusion to this thesis.



As chapter 6 outlined, the views of farmers can be summarized as 'functional aestheticism', a typical view being provided by Robinson: "These barns are part of our landscape, and we must keep them as part of our landscape. The way to do this is to bring them back into use in a profit motivated industry." (1982 p15).

Historical and Architectural factors possibly provide the greatest motivation for conserving TFBs, both in terms individual and collective value. Most Pennine farmers were aware of the valuable heritage they possessed, prompting Brunskill to attribute the considerable legacy of TFBs to farmers sense of history (1982 p13), particularly as so many are "Past their sell by date" (McLaughlin 1991). It is probably realistic to regard this awareness as being underpinned by an inertia resulting from the lack of development pressure during long periods of agricultural prosperity and stability.

Distinctive styles, materials and historical connections give TFBs a regional association and identity. While appreciation of such attributes is a more subjective motivation for conservation, it is one which most authors identify (Harvey 1987, Lake 1989, Penoyre 1978). Many farmers stressed this idea of regional identity and association, such as the Dales farmer who did not wish to destroy the "character of the Dales". Such sentiments are rarely defined but they were seen as important by most interested parties in the Pennines. For example in Northumberland, where a range of organisations stressed the need for farm tourism to be discreet and low key, in order to conserve the areas essential characteristics (3,4,5).

LPAs tended to adopt a more preservationist stance than the farming community, stressing the need to conserve TFBs even if no functional use could be found for them. In this context, 86% of LPA's stated that they would oppose developments entailing major alterations, a clear indication that possible benefits accruing from conversion would not be allowed to override conservation considerations.



Farming and development agencies, particularly the Tourist Boards, saw conservation as having benefits for the local economy. Such views were not stressed by the LPAs who did not give priority to the socio-economic aspects of conservation. Clearly different bodies and individuals view the issue from different standpoints. Some concentrate on the benefits as measured by the outcome of an individual building conversion. Others concentrate on the contribution to the wider landscape, and its associated values (chapter 8). Both approaches are equally valid but it is not surprising that LPAs tend towards the latter in fulfilling their duty to regulate development in the interests of the wider community and environment.

## **7.4 How to Conserve**

Conservation can be achieved through new or continued agricultural uses, conversion to other purposes and by preservation.

Chapter 6 has already outlined conversion options and raised questions as to the extent to which conversion is a means of conserving TFBs. Similarly the extent to which preservation can be classed as conservation is arguable. These proviso's need to be remembered in the following discussion.

### **7.4.1 Agricultural Uses**

"The authority would always prefer to see a traditional building remain in farm use as this results in the least external alteration and change in character of the building"

This informal policy statement from North East Derbyshire LPA serves to demonstrate the very real benefits of keeping TFBs within agricultural use. However it is an option which has tended to receive less attention than other types of conservation and conversion. This is hardly surprising given that most examples arise simply as part of the normal running of the farm. However, where buildings become redundant they can be the subject of concerted efforts to save the buildings.



It is a commonly held view that TFBs are invariably unsuitable for modern agriculture. For example, Robinson claimed that the requirements for modern farming were: "everything that an old building does not have!" (1982 p14). By contrast, other authors praise the functionality of TFBs: "vernacular farm buildings ... have not survived because of sentiment, but because they did the job well enough." (Darley 1988 p15)

Such evidence highlights the conflicting viewpoints of the modern agri-businessman and those who seek to conserve TFBs. Evidence can be found to support almost any viewpoint, highlighting the lack of consensus on whether TFBs have, or can be made to have, a role in modern agriculture. Some of the advantages and disadvantages of using TFBs in modern agriculture are outlined in the following two sections.

#### **7.4.2 Traditional Farm Buildings in Modern Agriculture: The Advantages**

Assuming that the structure is in a reasonable condition and the site, situation and design are appropriate, such circumstances are rare but not unknown. A good example comes from outside the Pennines, where The Holkham estate in Norfolk spent £33 000 on renovating a 19th century bullock yard, the cost of a modern equivalent being estimated at up to £200 000 (Coke 1991).

The changing requirements of farming have rendered most traditional buildings unsuitable for modern operations. However, they retain some advantages. One Dales farmer claimed that livestock are generally more comfortable in traditional barns owing to small size and greater warmth. He also stated that the existence of numerous small cowhouses was more flexible than a single, purpose built structure, allowing greater variation in stocking levels. Dispersion also reduces disease and fire risk (Frankland 1982). Such views are obviously open to question but they do suggest that



it is wrong to assume that such buildings have no agricultural future, particularly in view of their proven durability.

### **7.4.3 Traditional Farm Buildings in Modern Agriculture: The Problems**

The main problems of re-using TFBs arise from their design, size, site and situation. The design and small size of most TFBs presents a number of problems to their adaptation for modern agriculture. Built in a different technological age, the interiors of many TFBs are not accessible to tractors, making them costly, labour intensive structures. Typical comments include: "Too small doorways and ceilings for modern machinery" (Dales Farmer); "Because we cannot get a tractor in to clean them out" (Dales Farmer) and "Replaced by buildings more accessible to tractors" (Peak Farmer).

In the survey of buildings (chapter 5) only one building in 16 had doors large enough to allow tractor access. Similarly Hill (1985) found that only 10% of upland TFBs surveyed were accessible to tractors

The fundamental problem is that many TFBs do not satisfy certain basic needs of modern agricultural systems, particularly the requirement for large centralised, integrated buildings. The small, dispersed nature of many Pennine buildings severely limits the options for re-use. However, there are exceptions such as the 16th century Tithe barn at Bolton Abbey (SE 072 540) in the Dales, described as a "very unusual survival in the North of England" (DOE 1987b). This grade 2\* listed building is now used as the forestry workshops for the Bolton Abbey estate. Plate 7.1 demonstrates how successfully the essential features of this building are conserved by the present function. Even for a large estate, the upkeep of such buildings can prove prohibitive and the estate is having to consider converting the barn to an income generating museum or farm shop (6).



Plate 7.1 Former Tithe Barn Now Used as a Forestry Workshop,  
at Bolton Abbey in the Yorkshire Dales (SE 072 540)





Faced with economic reality, farmers often find it cheaper and more convenient to erect new buildings rather than to adapt traditional structures. However, in some cases financial motives can cover for a lack of effort and imagination. Some farmers might even be accused of wilful neglect in order to enhance their prospects of having new buildings permitted or grant aided. Others simply have little inclination to invest in repairs and maintenance. Adequate maintenance of existing structures largely avoids the need for new buildings. Imagination and flexibility are the keys to the re-use of TFBs. A example is provided by the Holkham estate, where the lowering of entrance floor level has allowed tractor access to one of the barns (Coke 1991).

#### **7.4.4 Maintenance**

Regular maintenance prolongs the life of agricultural buildings and can result in long-term savings. As Lord Coke stated "a small cost today saves a large outlay tomorrow" (1991 p25). For example one Dales farmer let his barn deteriorate too far until the "roof fell in and the damage was too extensive to repair". Two aspects of maintenance can be identified: 'full scale maintenance' and 'makeshift work'.

Makeshift repairs are carried out on TFBs as a matter of course by many farmers, either by 'textbook' methods, as outlined in the information sheet 'First Aid Repair To Traditional Farm Buildings' or, as commonly occurred in the Pennines, by farmers improvising. The objectives are to "prevent further deterioration so that at some future date more permanent repairs can be carried out." (Sell 1987 p1).

Roofs are a particular problem. Inadequate maintenance can lead to a serious and accelerating deterioration to the basic structure as damp gets into the timbers. Re-roofing in existing materials is to be preferred from the environmental point of view. Examples of this can be found in the Pennines (plate 5.5). However this entails a



degree of skill and, if new materials are needed, considerable financial outlay. As a result modern 'sheet' materials are often used in place of traditional roofing. Plate 7.2 shows how asbestos roofing can be used as a substitute for stone slates, the passage of time having blended the roof with the remainder of the building. The net result is preferable to dereliction but inferior to the use of traditional materials. In most cases first aid repairs are functional, allowing the building to continue its role on the farm with minimum outlay. In the example shown in plate 5.4 the corrugated iron roof hardly enhances the appearance of the building and its landscape value. However it does permit continued farm use. In a few cases first aid repairs are part of a systematic programme more in line with the idea of stewardship. For example, the Bolton Abbey estate pursued a policy of re-roofing all barns in brown plastic and asbestos (plate 7.3), the aim being to keep the buildings "ticking over" (6) in the hope that one day a use may be found for them.

A more dubious aspect of maintenance is the cannibalizing of one barn to provide materials for the repair of another building. The acceptability of this practice depends very much on the comparative conditions of the buildings in question and the quality of the finished product. The large estates interviewed all admitted to pursuing such a policy. It would seem to be a widespread practice in the Pennines and probably acceptable in areas where the stock of TFBs is large and there is a legacy of neglect to make up. Cannibalizing remoter barns can be justified if it means a secure future for other more 'sustainable' buildings. Since planning policies usually rule out large scale rebuilding of ruined structures their use as a source of materials can usually be justified (7). Such a functional approach contrasts with aesthetic values which would seek to find ways of conserving in situ.

Unless there is a particular motivation few farmers are willing to invest the significant amounts of time and capital needed to effect major repairs to TFBs. Buildings of



Plate 7.2 Bleagate Barn - South Tyne Valley (NY 718 437)



Plate 7.3 Drebley Cruck Barn - Wharfedale (SE 053 591)





outstanding value are an exception. In these cases the availability of grant aid and tax incentives, coupled with legal requirements, encourage major repair works.

#### **7.4.5 Financial Aid**

The replacement of the Agricultural Improvement Scheme (AIS) by the Farm and Conservation Grant Scheme (FCGS) in 1989 brought significant benefits for the conservation of TFBs. The AIS did not give grants for historic building conservation. Indeed the 30% grant (in Less Favoured Areas) for new buildings acted as a positive encouragement to replace traditional farm buildings (MAFF 1985b p12). The FCGS introduced inducements for conservation in the form of a 35% grant for the "Repair or reinstatement of traditional buildings" (MAFF 1989b p32). Listed Buildings are eligible for grants covering repairs and maintenance of TFBs, although as chapter 8 outlines, listing does not provide an accurate reflection of the heritage value of TFBs.

#### **7.4.6 Agricultural Use: A Summary**

When viewed in purely business terms TFBs would seem to have no future in modern farming. Some Pennine farmers had little sympathy with the aims of conserving TFBs. Equally, a significant number did demonstrate concern for the conservation of TFBs and the landscapes of which they are such an integral part. The problem is that such sentiments often have to take second place to business reality. Few Pennine farmers possessed the financial or labour resources to undertake large scale renovation of TFBs. Many had carried out 'first aid' repairs, but these were often of dubious aesthetic worth and the long term future of the building would still seem to be in doubt. The introduction of grants for TFBs under the FCGS would seem to be a positive step forward. However, it seems unlikely that public and private resources will ever be sufficient to cover repair and maintenance costs which can only increase as the buildings get older.



## **7.5 The Preservationist Approach**

Thus far the thesis has considered the conservation and conversion of traditional farm buildings from the stand-point of finding functional uses for buildings. Preservation offers another option, and one which has found increasing favour in some areas of the Pennines.

Preservation puts the emphasis on preserving buildings as structures in their own right, even without a positive role. In this context, 91% of LPAs felt that traditional farm buildings were worth saving for their own sake. The concept also has strong support from most other statutory and non-statutory bodies. Farmers have been less supportive of preservation, reflecting their practical and entrepreneurial approach.

Until recently most preservation of TFBs was confined to buildings of special value, usually grade 1 or 2\* listed buildings. In extreme cases English Heritage or the DOE have taken control of buildings to ensure their preservation. Although this has mainly applied to the great 'cathedral barns' of the lowland areas and no such examples were found in the Pennines. The more modest structures of the Pennines mostly have collective rather than individual value, meaning that a spatial preservation approach is required for conservation to be effective, such initiatives include ESA's and the Barns and Walls Conservation Scheme (Map 2.2).

### **7.5.1 Environmentally Sensitive Areas**

Two ESA's have been designated in the Pennines (Pennine Dales and North Peak), the aim being to "help conserve those areas of high landscape value which are vulnerable to changes in farming practices" (MAFF 1989a).

The ESA approach to buildings is essentially preservationist and does not actively encourage positive re-use. By way of example the guide-lines to the Pennine Dales



ESA stipulate that "Any weather-proof field barns which you own or are responsible for must be maintained in a weather-proof condition using traditional materials" (MAFF 1987d p3).

Both the Pennines ESA's include repair and maintenance of TFBs in their guide-lines. However such guide-lines have their limitations. Although ESA agreements cover TFBs they concentrate on maintenance and do not allow for the restoration of redundant barns. Combined with the small area and the voluntary nature of the scheme this means that they can only provide a partial answer to preserving TFBs.

#### **7.5.1.1 The Pennine Dales ESA**

The Pennine Dales provide a good example of how ESA designation contributes to the preservation of TFBs. Designated in 1987 the ESA covers most of the valleys in the Dales region, together with parts of the North Pennines. Grant payments were set at £100/hectare/year in 1990, with payment being by two instalments. As with all ESA's TFBs form only a small part of the ESA objectives which are outlined as follows:

"to encourage farmers to manage their hay meadows and pastures so that the floristic richness is maintained or improved;

to maintain and improve the landscape and ecological interest of the wet pasture and rough grazing of the allotments (enclosed moorland);

to maintain and upgrade the classic landscape features including the small scale field pattern of drystone walls and hedges, the stone field barns, archaeological earthworks and semi-natural woodlands." (MAFF 1989a p21).

Despite such worthy aims the Yorkshire Dales National Park Committee concluded that ESA's did not provide adequate protection for barns and walls (Yorkshire Dales National Park Committee 1988 p2). As a result a new approach was adopted in the form of a 'Barns and Walls Conservation Scheme'.



### **7.5.2 The Barns and Walls Conservation Scheme (BWCS)(2)**

The ESA considers farm buildings as part of wider preservationist aims. Clearly in the unique case of the Yorkshire Dales and particularly Swaledale (chapter 5), more specific targeting is needed to adequately protect TFBs. To this end, the National Park Committee established a pilot Barns and Walls Conservation Scheme in Swaledale and Arkengarthdale in 1989. The aim of which is to preserve the farming landscape "which is one of the most distinctive and appealing in Western Europe" (Yorkshire Dales National Park 1990a p1).

The scheme operates by offering grant aid of up to 80% (sometimes as a top-up on the 35% FCGS grant) for the repair and restoration of walls and field barns. Preference is given to "long-term repair rather than day-to-day maintenance", thus encouraging farmers to look beyond the first aid repairs, which have tended to dominate in the past. The following proposal for one Swaledale barn provides an example of the types of work conducted: "patching the roof;...rebuilding; repointing; and fitting new doors" (Yorkshire Dales National Park Committee 1991 p3).

Such a scheme is costly and needs to have a long term outlook. Consequently the Conservation Area designation was used as a way of making repairs eligible for English Heritage funding. This broke new ground, as Conservation Areas had previously been confined to built-up areas.

The scheme has a budget of £66800 (1990-1991), jointly funded by English Heritage, the National Park, the Countryside Commission and Richmondshire D.C.. With the average project costing in excess of £5000 (table 7.1), it not surprising that the scheme is heavily oversubscribed.



**Table 7.1 Grant Aid Under the Barns and Walls and Conservation Scheme 1991-1992 (as of May 1991)**

Case	Estimated Cost (£)	GRANTS (%)			Farmers (£) Contribution
		MAFF	BWCS	Total	
1	6080	35	45	80	1216
2	3780	35	45	80	756
3	6804	0	80	80	1361
4	3000	0	80	80	600
5	8225	0	80	80	1645
6	4396	0	80	80	879
Total	32285				6457
Mean	5381				1076

N.B. BWCS = Barns and Walls Conservation Scheme  
MAFF = Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food



Initially the scheme was hampered by opposition from the NFU and the CLA, who feared the bureaucratic controls which the designation of a Conservation Area brings (Yorkshire Dales National Park Committee 1988 and 1989b). To this end, there was an unsuccessful attempt to adapt Conservation Area regulations by removing the less relevant rules, such as controls on tree felling (Ibid). Fears over bureaucracy would seem to be well founded, when the case of Swaledale is considered. In this dale grants for TFBs are available through the Barns and Walls Conservation Scheme, Farm and Conservation Grant Scheme and Environmentally Sensitive Area, not to mention grants for historic buildings and conversions. Such duplication is likely to lead to confusion, and may even act as a disincentive to participation. There is a need for a more unified and wide ranging approach if TFBs are to be properly conserved.

Despite grant aid farmers could still be facing a bill of over £1000, with few material benefits to show for it. For this reason, the officer in charge is pressing for the discretion to offer up to 100% grant.

In many ways this scheme seems to be faced with an impossible task given the available resources. There are an estimated 1000 barns in the Conservation Area all being "in need of remedial attention" (Davenport 1990). The inability to fund works in Swaledale calls into question the stated aim of extending the scheme to the whole National Park, which could cost an estimated £2 million/yr. Whilst being appropriate for relatively small 'extreme' cases, this approach would seem to be unrealistic on a regional or national basis.

### **7.5.3 Other Preservationist Approaches**

The BWCS and ESA's are just part of a plethora of initiatives aimed at preserving traditional farm landscapes. The Northumberland National Park operates a grant scheme which offers, amongst other things, a 25% grant for the repair and



maintenance of traditional farm buildings, with the option of a 'top up' on the 35% FCGS grant from MAFF. A similar scheme operates in the Peak Park.

Financial pressure provides a strong motive for conservation, as witnessed by the efforts of large estates to obtain relief on Inheritance Tax by formulating a 'heritage plan' involving conservation and public access agreements and including measures to conserve TFBs (8). For example, the Bolton Abbey estate has agreed a management plan with the Countryside Commission and Yorkshire Dales National Park in order to obtain relief on inheritance tax. An example of the effectiveness of the plan was found at Crakeland (SE 047 543). The tenant on this farm was subject to the terms of the management agreement, strictly controlling new development. However, he owned some adjacent land and as a consequence had been able to develop new pre-fabricated barns and a slurry pit, making a mockery of the tight controls on surrounding estate land. It was impossible to assess how this had affected TFBs but clearly the incentive to maintain and use them would be less.

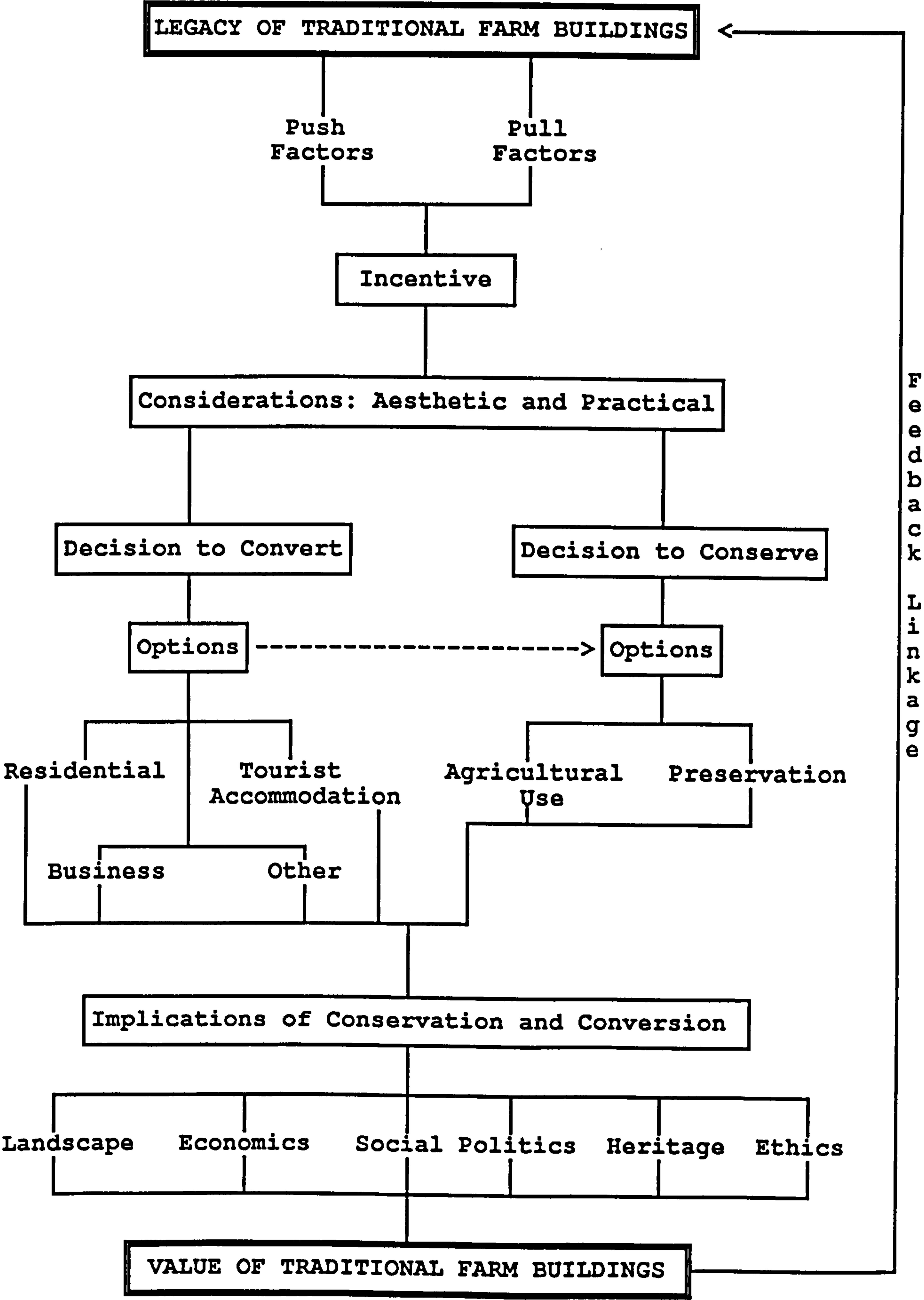
## **7.6 The Philosophy of Conservation**

In the end the needs and justification for conservation and preservation hinge on the perception of value, especially the balance between tangible and intangible values. The distinction between the functional conservation attitudes typical of farmers and the less functional concerns of local authorities and countryside agencies (7.3.2) is crucial in determining the desirability and likely success of conservation and preservation initiatives. For example, the Dales Barns and Walls Conservation Officer attributed farmers scepticism of that scheme to the lack of tangible benefits (2).

The distinction between conservation and preservation remains somewhat ill defined and may simply be another way of expressing the division between tangible and intangible benefits. For example, the involvement of English Heritage in the Barns



Fig 7.1 Conservation and Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings: The Process





and Walls Conservation Scheme was based on an appraisal of the financial value of historic landscapes in terms of tourist revenue, recreation and employment generation. In other words preservation can have value in terms of its contribution to cherished landscapes, and their associated values.

By discussing conservation and conversion, Chapters Six and Seven have addressed the 'How' question outlined in the Introduction. However, the processes of conservation and conversion are to a large extent based on an assumed value of TFBs. Chapter Eight investigates this value, introducing the final fundamental question namely, 'Why' is it important to save TFBs (fig. 7.1)?



## Notes to Chapter Seven

### 1. Interview

Interview with the agent to the Chatsworth Estate, 14/8/90.

### 2. Interview

Interview with the Dales Barns and Walls Conservation Officer, 11/10/90.

### 3. Interview

Interview with the Development Control officer to Tynedale D.C., 31/10/90.

### 4. Interview

Interview with the Development Officer to the Northumbria Tourist Board, 3/5/90.

### 5. Interview

Interview with the CLA northern regional secretary, 2/5/90.

### 6. Interview

Interview with the agent to the Bolton Abbey estate, 17/8/90.

### 7. The Proportion of Re-building in Conversion

Planning regulations do not permit conversion of farm buildings if major re-building is required. The Richmondshire D.C. (1984) policy note is a good example:

"Planning permission will not, therefore be granted where there is a need to reconstruct more than one wall from the foundations upwards"

### 8. Exemption from Inheritance Tax

Under the 1986 Finance Act estates are exempt from paying Inheritance Tax if the estate is gifted to a charitable organisation, the trustees of whom are approved by the Treasury. In addition, the estate must be run in the following manner:

"wholly or mainly for maintaining repairing or preserving for the public benefit buildings of historic or architectural interest, land of scenic, historic or scientific interest or objects of national, scientific, historic or artistic interest" (Section 84 of the 1976 Finance Act)



## **Chapter Eight**

### **The Value of Traditional Farm Buildings**



## 8.1 Introduction

Previous chapters have identified many aspects of the value of traditional farm buildings (TFBs) in relation to the aims, motives and results of conservation and conversion. This chapter aims to provide a comprehensive evaluation of TFBs in the Pennines and thus explain the rationale for their conservation and conversion. It also facilitates informed comment over the policy and practice pertaining to the conservation and conversion of TFBs in the conclusion.

In the introduction 5 fundamental questions were outlined:

What has become redundant?

Why have they become redundant?

How can they be conserved/ converted?

What are the ramifications of conservation and conversion?

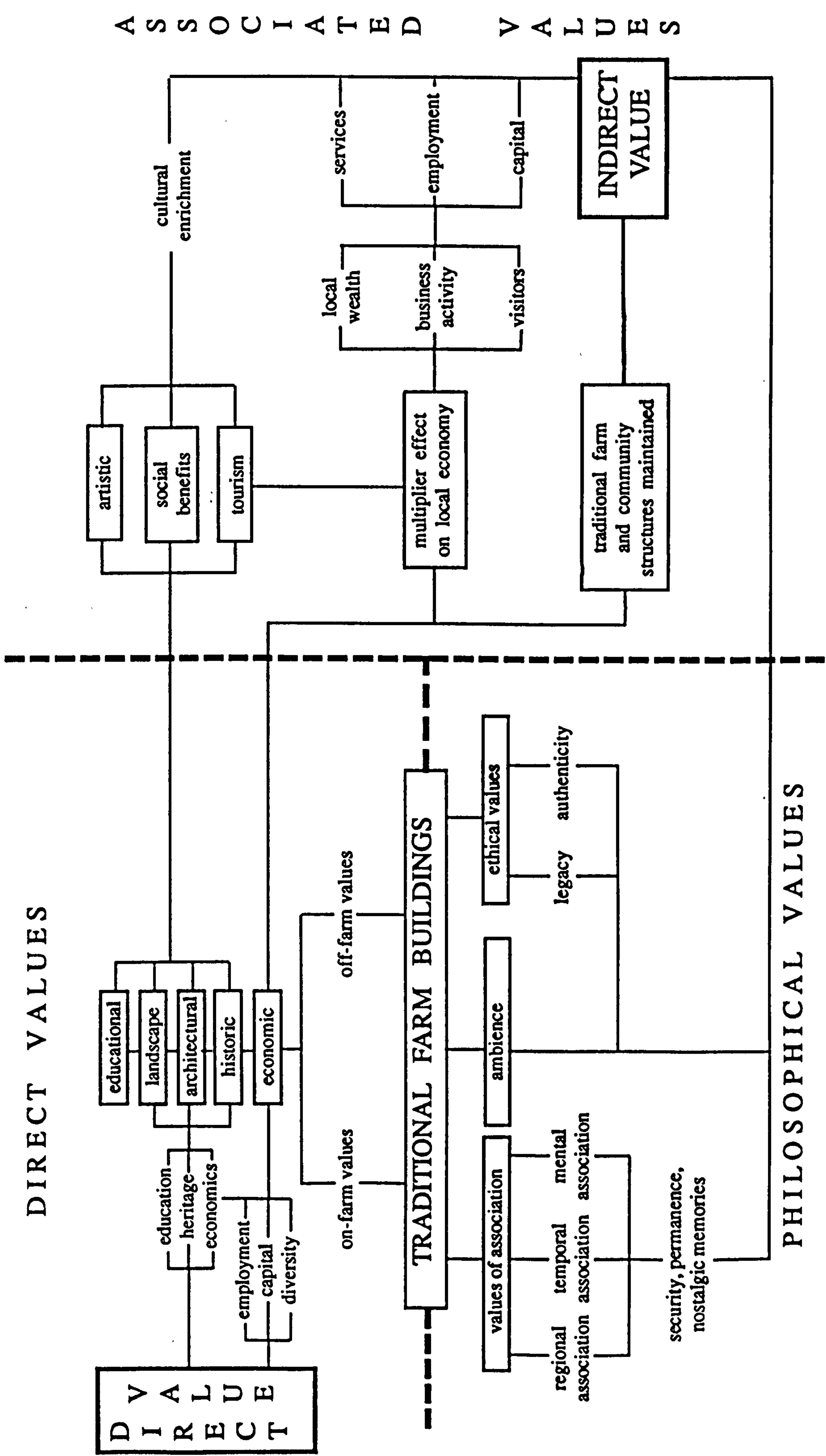
Why is it important to conserve/ convert?

Chapters 1 to 7 have addressed the first four questions. This leaves open the crucial question of why it is important to conserve and convert TFBs. In other words, what is the value of TFBs that makes them worth saving? The processes of conservation and conversion outlined in chapters 6 and 7 are largely based on an assumed value for TFBs, otherwise the often cheaper and easier option of new development would be more popular. For these reasons value is the most important question to address regarding TFBs.

There are difficulties of measurement and quantification. The diverse nature of 'value' has led to it being somewhat overlooked in existing studies. There appears to be a tendency to stress the adverse effects of conversion and the difficulties and costs of conserving TFBs. This chapter attempts to redress the balance on this seemingly gloomy outlook for TFBs. It stresses the positive contribution that they can make both economically and sociologically.



Figure 8.1 The Value of Traditional Farm Buildings





Wilkinson (1987) defined historic, social, landscape and resource values. Put simply, there are two main categories of value, aesthetic and functional. It is the balance between these options which lies at the heart of so many aspects of the conservation and conversion of TFBs. However the true value of TFBs can only be understood by identifying, and where possible measuring, the associated and philosophical values (fig.8.1). Associated values comprise the linkages to the main values of TFBs, such as the multiplier effect of a farm tourism development. Philosophical values are more abstract issues and include intangibles which are difficult to identify and measure. In the face of the often marginal financial justification for retaining TFBs, these motives can be the main reason for saving buildings and are manifest in two ways:

- a) the value of the buildings as structures in their own right;
- b) the value of developments which take place within the buildings.

The relative importance of these values has important implications for the balance between conservation and development interests when considering a project, with recognition that a development normally compromises the heritage value of a building to some extent.

The following discussion of value follows the format outlined in figure 8.1. It discusses direct values, before concluding by assessing philosophical values and where appropriate, making reference to 'associated values'.

## 8.2 On-Farm Values

Hill (1985) divided direct values into individual benefits and wider benefits. The former include considerations such as rent, employment and sale price. While the latter includes community and economic benefits. The individual 'on-farm' benefits are discussed in this section while the remainder of the chapter discusses wider



benefits such as landscape and historic value. These issues are covered under the headings 'farm' and 'conversion', respectively.

### 8.2.1 Agricultural Use

New or continued agricultural use of TFBs can generate a number of socio-economic benefits, not least job creation and additional income.

Declining agricultural employment means that the continued use of TFBs per se is unlikely to generate much employment in farming. If the decision has been made to develop or expand particular enterprises, the likelihood is that these would have taken place anyway using alternative premises. For example, a Tithe barn at Bolton Abbey (SE 072 540)(Plate 7.1) in the Dales presently houses a forestry workshop. However it is known that the owners were quite willing to consider construction of a new building as a replacement in the event of a decision to convert the barn. Thus the barn itself was not generating the employment but may have featured prominently in wider investment decisions.

In theory, the labour intensive design of TFBs mean that they could help to sustain employment. In practice such benevolence is unlikely as most farmers are aware of the need to minimize labour costs. For example, one Peak farmer constructed a "new cubicle shed due to the need to reduce labour costs".

Maintenance and repairs of buildings in the Pennines were largely of a 'first aid' nature, much of the work being carried out by the farm family, with little need for hired labour. It seems likely that the falling levels of farm employment may lead to routine maintenance work being sacrificed in favour of other more pressing requirements.



In some situations the renovation of TFBs can generate and support employment in traditional craft industries. Arguably this is less applicable in the Pennines where the simple stone construction requires fewer specialist techniques and less regular maintenance. Nevertheless it is an important part of local tradition that craft skills should be retained and passed on through apprenticeship and other forms of training. In this context, the 'Directory of Resources' for the 'Yorkshire Dales Barns and Walls Conservation Scheme' lists only 3 suppliers of new stone flags which are suitable for the area covered by the scheme. This indicates the specialist nature of many of the buildings in the area, the durability of the materials involved and the low level of demand. The fact that all three suppliers are located in the Pennines indicates that TFBs can help to sustain local employment.

The re-use or continued use of TFBs can save money for the farmer but direct choices between traditional and modern farm buildings are difficult to identify. Even if the capital costs of re-use prove to be cheaper the running costs of such 'inefficient' structures are often much higher. This is especially so where the traditional buildings are small and dispersed. One Dales farmer explained, that he had replaced his TFBs because they were "uneconomic to use and away from the home".

To summarize, evidence suggests that the use of TFBs in agriculture generates limited economic benefits. However they can be a more attractive proposition than new development options, particularly where capital resources are limited.

In many cases the continued use of TFBs in agriculture appears to have required a concerted effort from the farmers concerned. Such actions are not in keeping with those of rational businessmen. For example, a South Pennines farmer stated that "all of the buildings are in fact being used; however purpose-built buildings would of course be far better". Business problems were not cited as a constraint on new development so this example would seem to suggest that in many cases economic



considerations are not the sole reason for the continued agricultural use of TFBs. Appreciation of heritage, history and environment are important motives for many farmers. The fact that agricultural use preserves the structure and context of buildings suggests that these non-economic considerations are the main value of agricultural use.

### 8.2.2 Conversion

Conversion of TFBs also generates on-farm value, particularly in economic terms. There are two aspects to consider. Firstly there is the nature of the economic value of conversion. Secondly the relationship between conversions and new developments requires explanation.

At the farm level conversions to income generating uses are important in providing employment for family members. In some cases this is a prime motive for conversion. For example one Peak District farmer stressed that he had developed holiday accommodation in order to support the family, not out of choice, but because: "our farm is not large enough to support my wife, myself and son alone. If we had more acres we would not consider holiday accommodation". Thus the conversion of TFBs can help to keep family units together, particularly on marginal hill farms. In this context, smaller Pennine farms had a high propensity to convert (chapter 6)(1).

Evidence suggests that residential conversion can, in some cases, restrict or lead to the abandonment of functioning farmsteads thus detracting from the employment generation potential of conversion(2).

In some cases opportunities for family employment seem to have been an unforeseen side effect of conversion, rather than the reason for a development. This is illustrated by Bishop Field Farm Hotel (chapter 6) where the manager stated that "they would



not have developed this way had they known the results". The results had been the creation of full-time employment for the three adult members of the family and the consequent cessation of farming.

Conversion also brings financial benefits to the farm business. There are two main aspects to be considered: firstly can barn conversions prevent the failure of a farm business? Secondly is the demand for such conversions indicative of a quest for a higher standard of living amongst the modern generation of farmers? On the first point evidence suggests that conversion is rarely an option for unviable farm businesses. A possible exception is sale with the benefit of planning permission for residential use. Large investments coupled with long pay-back periods preclude most low income and indebted farmers from barn conversions. The quandary was eloquently summed up by a Peak farmer: "If you are struggling in farming you do not generally have vast amounts invested and if you are borrowing money it will take a long time to pay off"

Amongst the Pennine farmers, 78% of those who had carried out conversions expressed doubts as to the future of farming. This compared with a figure of 52% for the survey as a whole. However, awareness of difficulties is not the same as actually facing bankruptcy. Certainly none of the case studies were truly marginal farms.

Based on this evidence, it would appear that conversions are aimed at maintaining and enhancing the incomes and standards of living on the farm rather than for business survival. This is particularly so in view of the increasingly advantageous earning position of non-primary production (3). While being a prime motivation for conversion, the desire for higher standards of living also presents difficulties. Conversions which show a high return are often the least environmentally acceptable. This point was stressed by the Chatsworth Estate who felt that demands for urban



standards of living had made it more difficult to design environmentally acceptable conversions.

If the measurable economic benefits of on-farm conversion are limited, the most important aspect to emerge can be the associated value (fig 8.1) of helping to sustain traditional family farms. The merits of this were described by the Countryside Policy Review Panel as contributing: "relatively little to the total volume of production, but they are vital to the economy of rural communities and the character of the countryside." (1987 p9). From an aesthetic viewpoint, such family farms would seem to be infinitely preferable to the alternative 'ranch-style' arrangement which many authors feel would follow a collapse of traditional farming systems (Newby 1979, Yorkshire Dales National Park Committee 1989c).

### **8.3 Wider Economic Value of Conversions**

Consideration of direct economic aspects can move on from 'on-farm' values to consider the wider economic values. A dual classification is possible. Firstly there are the direct benefits to be obtained from businesses in converted farm buildings. Secondly it is possible to identify indirect benefits through associated services and suppliers.

#### **8.3.1 Direct Benefits**

Case studies (chapter 6) suggest that numbers of jobs created by conversion are rarely large. However, they can be significant in the rural labour force. One of the largest identified was Bishop Field Farm Hotel which employed 18 staff (2 full-time and 16 part-time), all from the local area. While not providing the main source of income, this sort of conversion does provide valuable income support and part-time employment. Such a venture also encourages specialist employment such as cooks and builders. In so doing it can sustain, or even enhance, the local skills base and



range of services available, with obvious benefits to the wider community. On a negative note, the emphasis on seasonal and part-time work can introduce an element of instability into the rural economy, although such employment is surely better than nothing. Other case studies also emphasize this limited scope for job creation in tourism. For example Cote Bank Farm in the South Pennines employed no outside labour in operating its 3 Self-Catering cottages and Bed and Breakfast accommodation.

It would be reasonable to assume that business conversions might generate more employment per case. The workshops at Pilsey (chapter 6) provide a good example, employing around 16 people with several more in the estates farm shop. In addition tenants are predominantly local firms employing local people. Many business conversions are not affected by seasonality. For this reason these types of jobs are often preferable to those related to tourism.

On the negative side, it needs to be remembered that in many business conversions farming has largely ceased, with a possible loss of farm employment potential. Although in cases such as Pilsey workshops (chapter 6), redundancy of the buildings preceded the establishment of the workshops so the enterprise was not a cause of redundancy and resulted in a net increase in employment.

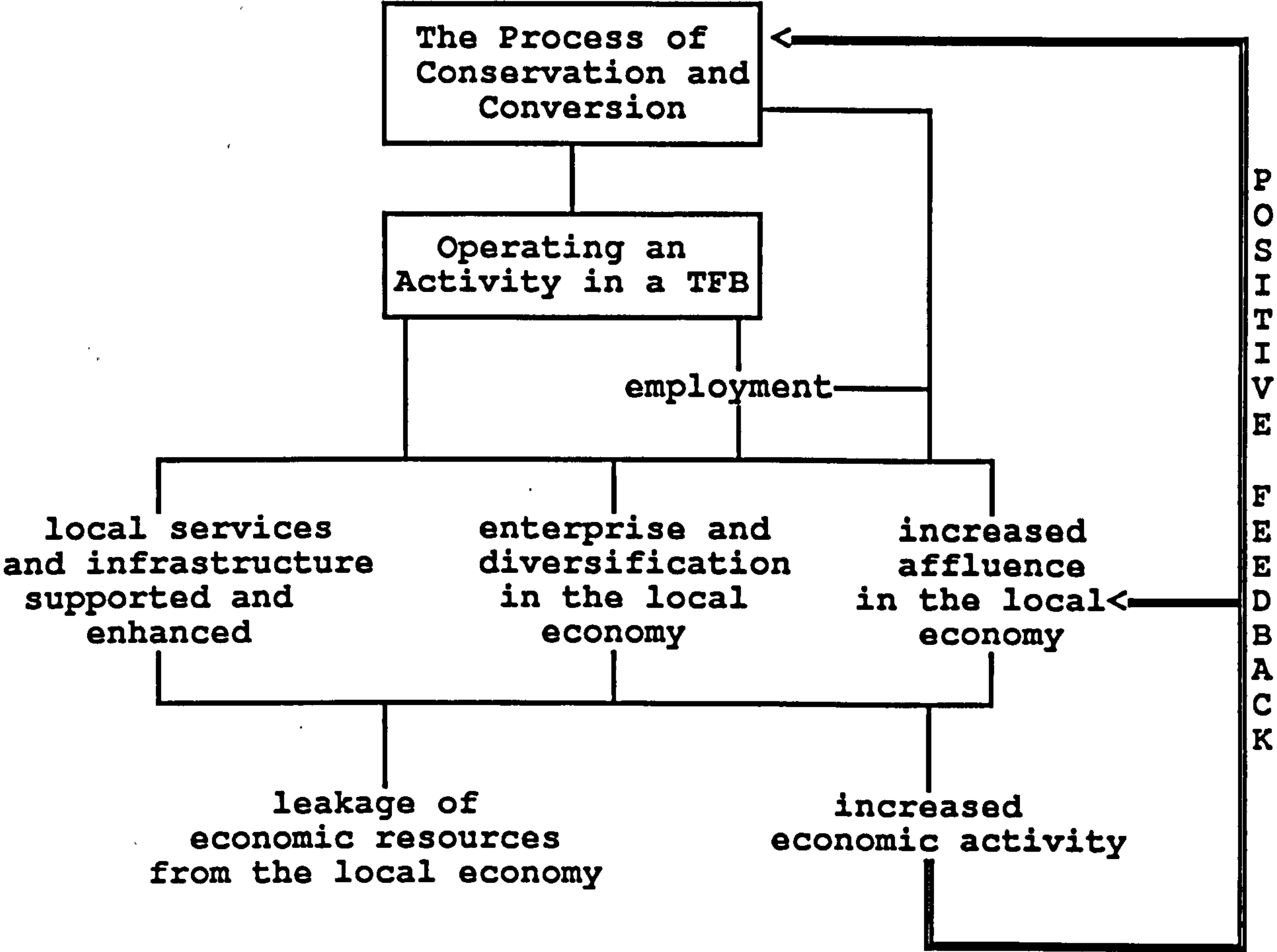
Residential conversions create little 'direct' employment, except for the conversion process which generates work for local builders and tradesmen. However, even residential conversions can have significant indirect benefits to the rural economy.

### **8.3.2 Indirect Benefits (Fig 8.2)**

Despite difficulties of identification and measurement, the indirect benefits of conservation and conversion can be significant. For example the Pilsey Farm Shop (chapter 6) uses local supplies wherever possible including locally manufactured



Figure 8.2 The Indirect Economic Benefits from Conservation and Conversion





dairy produce and flour. In so doing, it helps to sustain employment and forms an outlet for lucrative value added production.

Conversions also help to sustain local services. For example, a petfood producer near Alston in the North Pennines is based in a converted farm building. The company deliberately uses the local postal service rather than outside carriers. In doing so it contributes to the maintenance of a service to the benefit of the whole community (Greenwood 1990).

Similar indirect benefits also relate to spending by visitors attracted into areas by a conversion enterprise. While it is obvious that such linkages exist problems arise in their measurement. Having said this the recognition of indirect benefits can radically alter the perceived merits of conservation and conversion projects. The net value of conversion also depends on the relationship between conversion and new development, which is discussed in the next section.

### **8.3.3 Relationship Between Conversion and New Development**

The net value of conversion also depends on the relationship between conversion and new development. The crucial question is, whether conversion generates a net increase in development, or would development have occurred anyway even if a TFB were not available.

Conversions on functioning farms undoubtedly generate a net increase in business activity. They change activity from a single to dual operation, although the scale of the various enterprises varies considerably (chapter 6). One possible exception could be the tourist industry where a number of farmers expressed concern at the perceived saturation of the market. In theory this could result in direct competition between



businesses. Which could mean that conversion to tourist accommodation might not bring overall net economic benefits, if some businesses fail due to the competition. Such cause and effect is almost impossible to establish and in any case most of the Pennines would seem to have scope for further tourist development. The farm environment is an attraction in itself thus reducing the extent of the competition with off-farm businesses. This rural theme was illustrated in a number of case studies. For example at Ryehill Farm (chapter 6) advertising stressed that the visitor had a "unique opportunity to see life on a small working farm". Similarly a self-catering development at Cote Bank Farm (SK 029 827) in the South Pennines stressed that visitors were "free to wander wherever they like on the farm". It seems that farm tourism fills a specific niche in the market and as such is unlikely to force non-farm operators out of business.

Competition between farm tourist operations may become a problem in some sectors of the industry, particularly Bed and Breakfast. However the small scale of most of these developments serves to limit the adverse effects of competition, as few farmers rely on Bed and Breakfast for business survival. Equally, the ETB recognises much of the Pennines as a tourist growth area. To this end a Tourist Development Action Programme has been established in Northumberland (4) and the North and South Pennines have been identified as priority tourist areas (ETB 1988). The consensus amongst respondents in the Pennines was that there is still scope for quality and enterprising tourist operations.

Although it is possible to envisage a situation where conversion could take place in lieu of new development, with no net gain to the local economy, identifying such a situation is extremely difficult. On the other hand, the special value of TFBs means that in some cases their conversion is acceptable where new development would not be. For example, the Burnley Local Plan allows for the relaxation of controls on isolated development if the buildings are of structural, historic or landscape value.



Similarly the plan also makes exceptions to Green Belt restrictions in the case of redundant farm buildings (Burnley D.C. 1990). Research suggests that on balance the conversion of TFBs does generate a net increase in development and associated economic benefits. Considering the case studies outlined in chapter 6, it is doubtful whether 'new build' equivalents of some of the conversions would be permissible on planning grounds or whether they would be economically viable. The next section discusses the economic profiles of some of these case studies.

## **8.4 An Economic Appraisal of Conversion**

This section aims to indicate the kinds of direct economic benefits from conversion at the individual and regional level. The diversity of enterprises, variations in farm management and complexities of valuing conservation, mean that such a calculation should be used as a guide-line rather than as a definitive measurement.

### **8.4.1 Individual Level**

#### **Cote Bank Farm (Self-catering)(South Pennines SK 029 827)**

Total cost of conversion, cottage one = £20 000 (in 1982)

Total cost of conversion, cottage two = £30 000 (in 1986)

£11 000 (22%) was obtained from ETB grant aid, other finance came from loans and private funds

Average net monthly income = c. £300

There is an 80% occupancy with the season lasting from Easter to mid October

Thus at 100% occupancy annual net takings = 6 months x £300 = £1800

Net takings at 80% occupancy = £1440 per annum (for example actual net profit for the 1988 season = £1500)

Hired labour = 0



Considering that these figures do not include the considerable input of family labour (no hired labour is employed) the benefits of such a venture would seem to be dubious, particularly as the pay-back period could be in the region of 25 years.

**Ryehill Farm (Bed and Breakfast)(NY 958 579)(N. Pennines)**

Total conversion costs = £100 000 (£50 000 Self-catering,  
£50 000 Bed and Breakfast)

Potential bednights = 365 days x 17 people capacity = 6205

Bednights at 37.8% occupancy (1989 figure) = 2346

Based on this occupancy rate the following gross profit can be calculated: 2346 x £14 per day per person = £32 844

Total annual costs = c. £21 894

The gross profit and annual costs give the following Net Profit: £32 844 - £21 894 = £10 950 per annum

Hired labour = 2 part-time

**Clark House Camping Barn (SD 617 436)(South Pennines)**

Total conversion costs = £8000

A grant of £2000 (25%) was obtained from Farm Diversification Scheme, the remaining investment came from private savings and loans.

Bednights for the third year of operation have been estimated at: 15 persons x 365 nights x 28% occupancy = 1533

Based on this occupancy the following Gross profit can be calculated: 1533 x £1.52 overnight charge per person = £2330

Total annual costs are = £1051

Consideration of gross profit and annual costs gives a Net Profit of: £2330 - £1051 = £1279 - financial charges = £279

No hired labour was employed at this site.



**Pilsey Farm Workshops (SK 243 708)(Peak)**

Total conversion costs = £64 000

A £17 500 RDC grant was obtained on £50 000 of the costs, with £46 500 coming from the owners

In 1986 rent levels were £1.50 per sq. ft. per annum

The total rented area= 4500 sq.ft.

Based on these figures there is a potential annual rent of:  $4500 \times £1.50 = £6750$

Hired labour employed is around 16

N.B. At 1991 rent levels (£2 to £2.50) takings from annual rent could be in excess of £10 000

Day to day maintenance is the responsibility of the tenant, so on this basis the pay-back period could be as little as seven years (Part Source: Wilkinson 1987).

These four examples illustrate a number of points. The popularity for conversion for tourist accommodation belies the low rate of return for this option (Appendix I). The main problems are, seasonality, which reduces annual occupancy rates to as low as 30% and large initial capital investment which is a particular problem for Self-catering developments. Bed and Breakfast enterprises rely more on utilising existing facilities on the farm, thus minimizing capital requirements.

These problems mean that it can take over 20 years to show a return on capital. Such long term investments will not appeal to many farmers. These problems are not confined to the Pennines. For example, Davies found that in all LFA's Self-catering facilities showed an annual return on investment of only 8% compared with 37% for Bed and Breakfast (1983 p37). Most developments seem to fall into one of two categories. Either they are capital and labour intensive conversions requiring a level of investment which is too great for many farmers or they are low cost conversions



which generate insignificant returns. A compromise situation seems to be all too rare, unless the residential option is chosen.

In general the economics of business conversions are far more favourable than tourist accommodation. The cost of conversion is usually less per unit area while the returns are greater. In addition the practice of renting out properties makes little demand on farm labour resources.

Business and tourist conversions should all be regarded as long term investments, where the limited returns are compensated for by greater economic stability and the increased value of the property. In contrast short term profits offer a more attractive proposition to many farmers, hence the degree of interest in residential conversions which can show an immediate and significant return on a limited investment of capital and labour (chapter 6)(Appendix I).

#### **8.4.2 Regional Level: the Pennines**

Data from individual cases has been used to assess the overall economic contribution that conversion makes to the Pennines Region (Appendix I). Such a calculation is necessary for comparison with aesthetic considerations.

The variations between and within the various conversion options combined with the limited sample size make it difficult to calculate an aggregate annual income from conversion in the Pennines. The calculation should be viewed only as a guide and does not purport to offer a definitive figure.

Residential conversion generates about £6 million per annum in direct income to Pennine farmers. Most of this income is accounted for by sale prior to conversion, usually with the benefit of planning permission. Obviously if the value of further sales



by developers was considered then the total would be significantly greater (Appendix I).

Conversion to tourist accommodation nets about £300 000 per annum for Pennine farmers, most of this being accounted for by Self-catering and Bed and Breakfast establishments.

The varied scale and ownership of business conversions makes it very difficult to calculate an aggregate figure. For these reasons the annual income of £677 000 from rents should be treated with caution.

When these figures are aggregated it is estimated that a total of about £8.2 million annual net income accrues to Pennine farmers from conversion. Considering the size of the survey area (13 878 km<sup>2</sup>) this may seem small.

To give a comparison it is possible to multiply the mean net farm incomes for 'Northern LFA Livestock Farms' (£14 900) (MAFF 1990) by the estimated number of farms in the region (4185). This gives a net annual income from Pennine farming of £62 356 500. Based on this calculation, £8.2 million emerges as a significant figure in relation to overall farm incomes, even if it is still far from being a panacea for the problems facing the farming industry.

## 8.5 Historic Value

Having assessed economic values it is important to discuss the more aesthetic aspects, of which historical value is one of the most important. Historic values help to compensate for the economic and functional shortcomings of TFBs. Harvey concluded that "the farmers' embarrassment is the historians opportunity" (1970 p18).



Historic value manifests itself in a number of ways. The buildings can tell us much about the way of life, farming systems, and social structures of past rural societies. For example, the Field Barn systems of the Dales (chapter 5) form a superb historical monument, providing information about a way of life which has largely passed into history. In so doing, they provide a model of a farming system which evolved to cope with the special demands of an upland area before the age of modern transportation. The Barns and Walls Conservation Scheme (chapter 7) is in part a formal recognition of this historical value, taking the view that the barns "produce a landscape that is both beautiful and of great historical interest" (Yorkshire Dales National Park Committee 1990a p1).

Buildings also document technological advances. One example is the gin gangs found in Northumberland and the chimneys which indicate the development of steam threshing. More specifically Nigel Harvey argued that the most important farm building in Britain was a Northumberland building used to house one of Trevethick's early steam threshing machines. (1991 p9).

TFBs facilitate historical understanding by providing a baseline from which to judge modern developments. For example evidence from former mining areas of the Pennines suggests that the present increase in residential conversions may not be so revolutionary, or so final, as is often supposed. One Dales farmer pointed out that some of his redundant barns were in fact former cottages which had been converted to agricultural use after the demise of mining. Thus in the historical context conversion is neither a new or one-way process, raising question marks over the finality of the present increase in conversions. Similar principles apply to non-residential conversions. A good example is to be found in Allenheads where one building was previously converted from a coach house to a cow byre but has now been converted back to non- agricultural use in the form of a coffee shop.



Such historical evidence can be used to question the attitudes of those farmers who felt that farming was the only legitimate activity in the survey area. Such as one North Pennine farmer who took the firm view that "we should not be chopping and changing every time things get hard". The historical fluctuations in Pennine populations suggest that the present high demand for residential conversion is likely to be temporary, something which policy makers need to consider.

Social and political processes are also recorded by TFBs. For example, the tithe barn at Bolton Abbey (chapter 7) provides an indication of the feudal system which used to operate in the area. Similarly, the defensive Bastle Houses (chapter 5) record the instability of the border regions of Northumberland.

On the national scale TFBs provide an indicator of macro-economic changes. The general absence of such buildings dating from the first half of the 20th century, bears testimony to the effects of war and recession. During these difficult times new investment was much reduced and farmers continued to use pre-existing TFBs rather than building new structures (chapter 4).

TFBs undoubtedly have historic value in their own right and also act as a benchmark by which to judge latter day policy and practice.

## 8.6 Architectural Value

Architectural and historic values are closely allied. Architectural value is accorded great importance by most people involved with TFBs. Local planning authorities (LPAs) saw it as the most important consideration in conserving TFBs (chapter 7). Architectural features may be of value from a purely academic point of view but they also contribute to regional value and allow dating of buildings and understanding of styles.



Regional value is mainly recognised through components of the vernacular heritage. Local building materials add a distinctive colour and texture to regional buildings. A classic example comes from the Peak District with its division between the limestone area of the south and Millstone Grit in the north. This is "reflected directly both in the character of the farming and in the character of the farm buildings." (Dower 1991 p43).

Building types, styles and techniques add further regional value. For example the arched doorways of 'laithehouses' (chapter 5) are a distinctive feature of the South Pennines . The National Trust has been a prime mover in promoting the use of traditional techniques in the repair and maintenance of buildings on its estate. In the Lake District the Trust re-introduced traditional roofing methods using roughly hewn 'Tom' slates (5) rather than modern standardized slates (Denyer 1991 p46). Unfortunately not many private landowners are willing or able to go to such lengths to preserve the architectural details of TFBs (Ibid).

Architectural features allow dating of many buildings, thus contributing to historical study. For example, it is known that 'cruck construction' ceased to be used in the Pennines during the 17th century (Reynolds 1985).

Historic and architectural values demonstrate that TFBs are important both as structures in their own right and in their contribution to understanding the rural environment. However, to allow comparison with 'economic value' it is preferable to quantify the 'historic and architectural value' (heritage value) of TFBs. The following section utilises listed building data in an attempt to measure the historic and architectural value of TFBs in the Pennines.



### 8.6.1 Listed Farm Buildings: A Measurement of Heritage Value

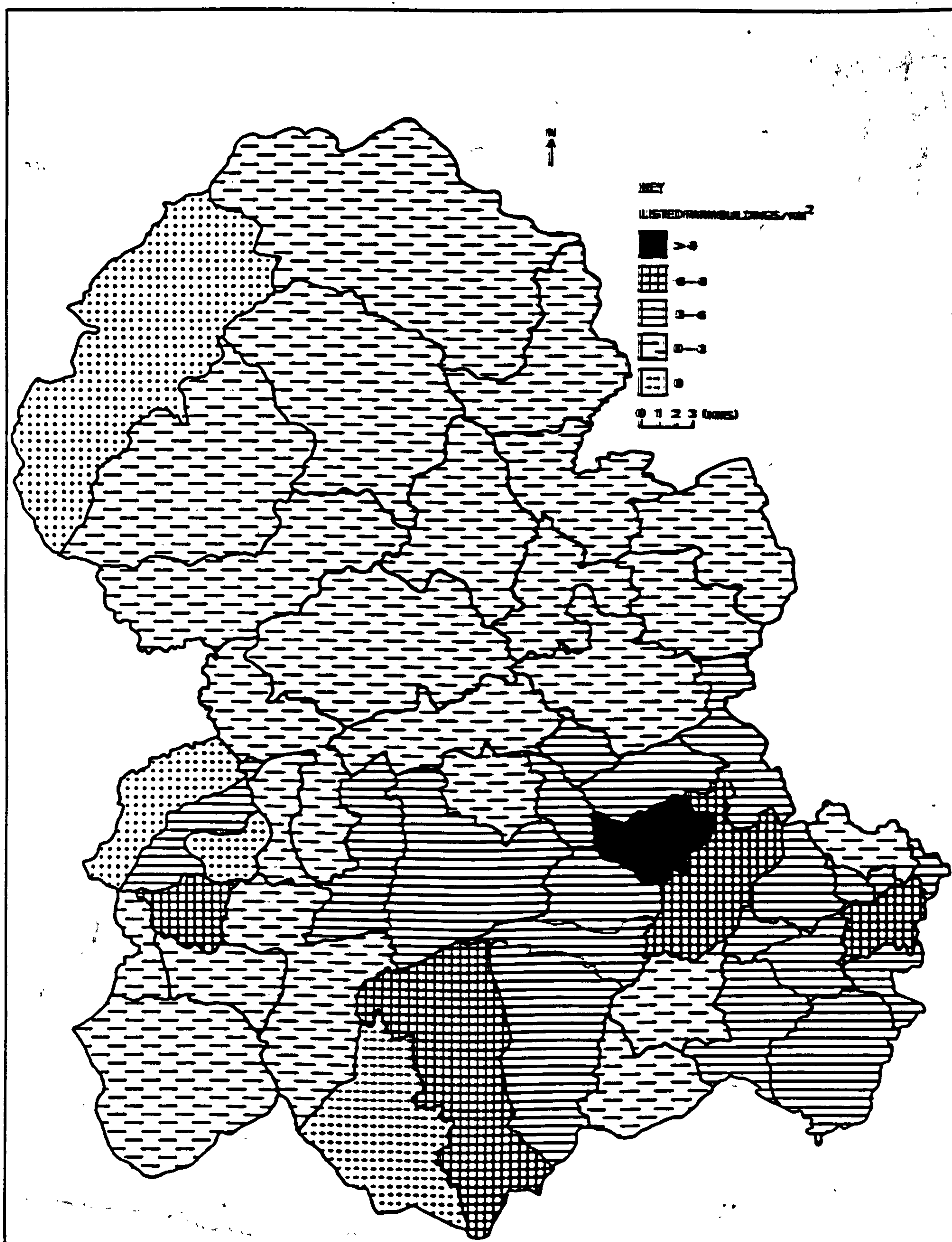
An attempt was made to compare the resource of listed farm buildings in the 5 areas of the Pennine survey. One district was examined in each of the areas and on this basis a limited comparison was possible.

Figure 8.3 shows the density of listed farm buildings in the five districts chosen as regional representatives. Measuring density rather than total numbers takes account of size variations between districts. Figure 8.3 suggests that the Pendle/South Pennines has the highest concentration of buildings of a high heritage value (based on the listing criteria). The Craven/Dales area has the second highest concentration. At first sight this is rather surprising given that the questionnaire indicated that this was the region with most TFBs. The explanation for this result comes from the criteria for listing, the application of which largely excludes the ubiquitous Dales barn and concentrates on a few outstanding examples (6). This prompted the Dales 'Barns and Walls Conservation Scheme' Officer to conclude that "a decision was taken not to list field barns, there being too many, with the subsequent problem of where to draw the line".

The breakdown of data for Derbyshire Dales District (Peak), indicates the types of listed farm buildings (figure 8.4). Farmhouses are the most common (56%), being twice as numerous as barns. This is indicative of the fact that farmhouses are more likely to demonstrate features which go beyond the purely functional. In this sense listed building data provides an inaccurate measure of the TFB heritage.

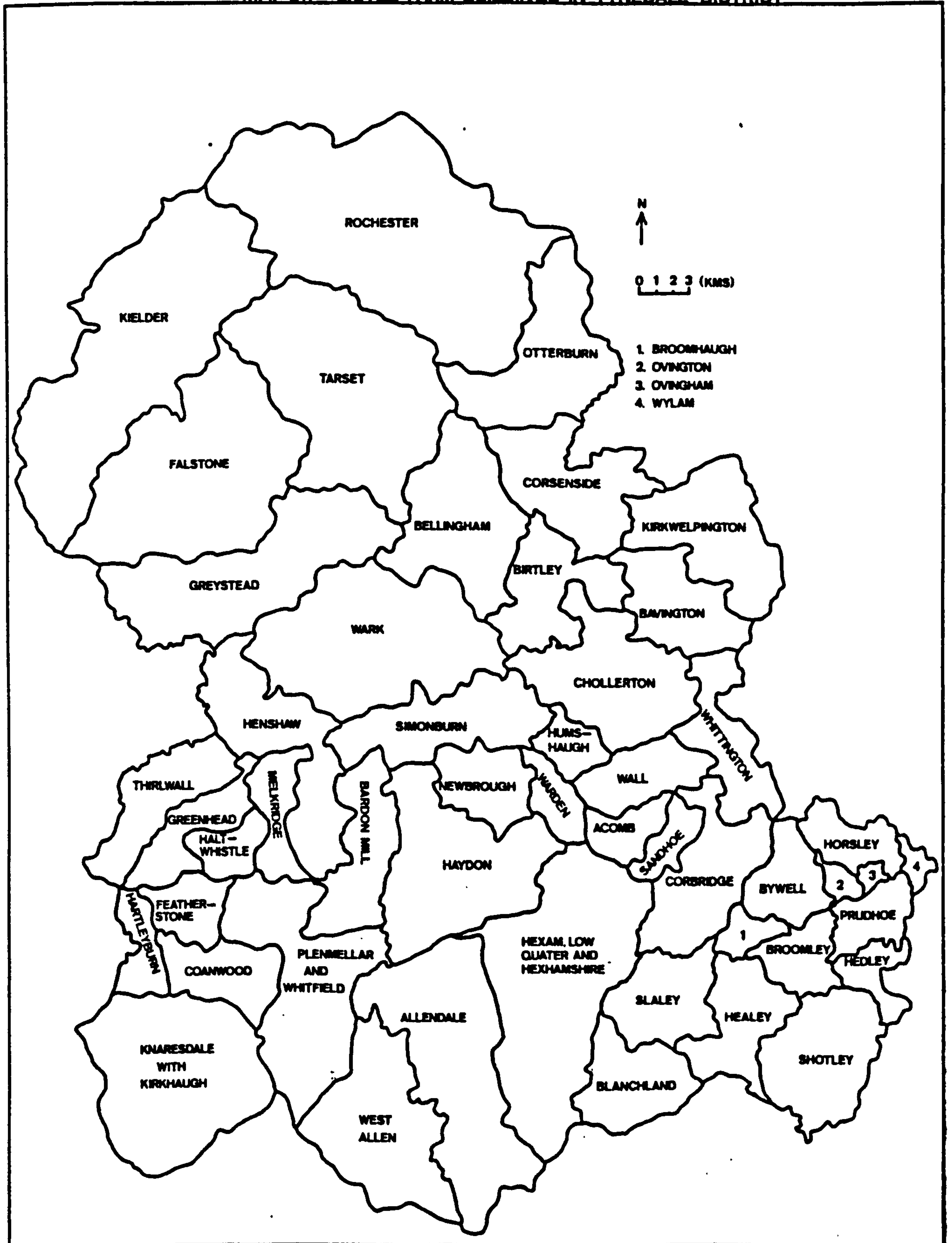
There are a few 'outstanding listed farm buildings' (grade 1 and 2\*). Figure 8.3 suggests that the concentration of this resource may be highest in the North and South Pennines, 0.02/km<sup>2</sup> and 0.01/km<sup>2</sup> respectively. The Cheviot has the lowest concentration, perhaps indicating the remoteness of the area.







MAP 8.1 LISTED FARM BUILDINGS IN TYNE DALE DISTRICT





MAP 8.1 LISTED FARM BUILDINGS IN TYNE DALE DISTRICT

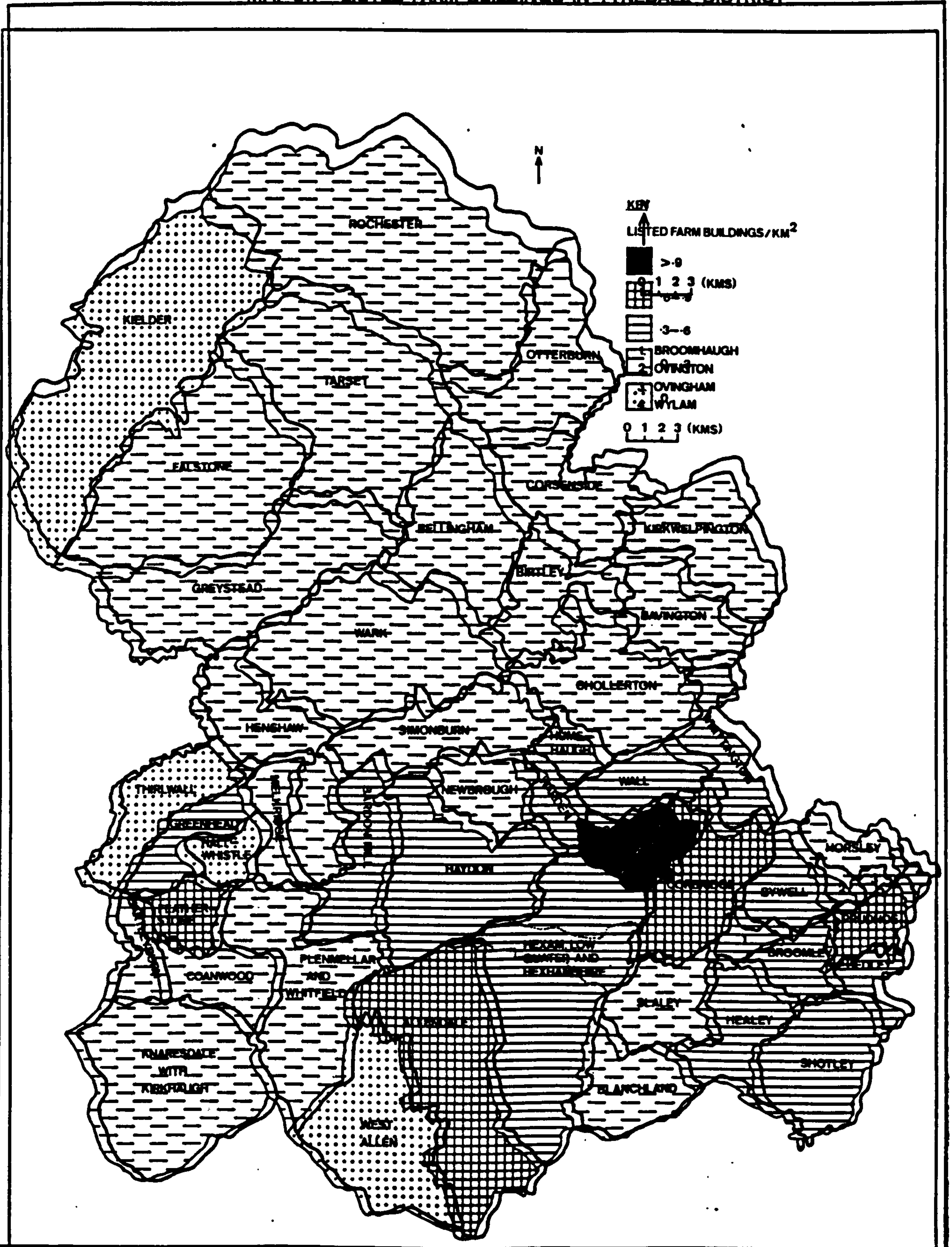




FIGURE 8.3

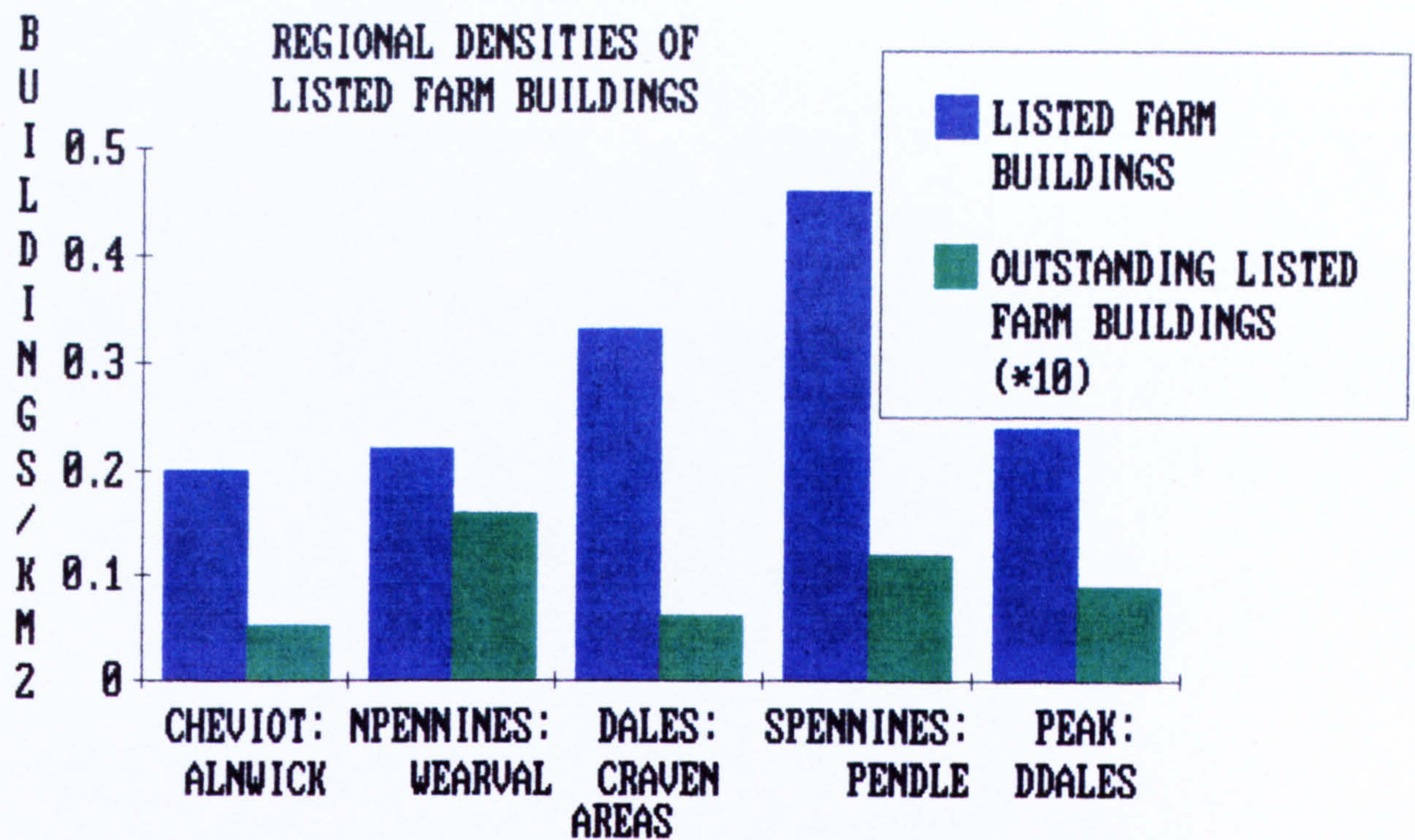
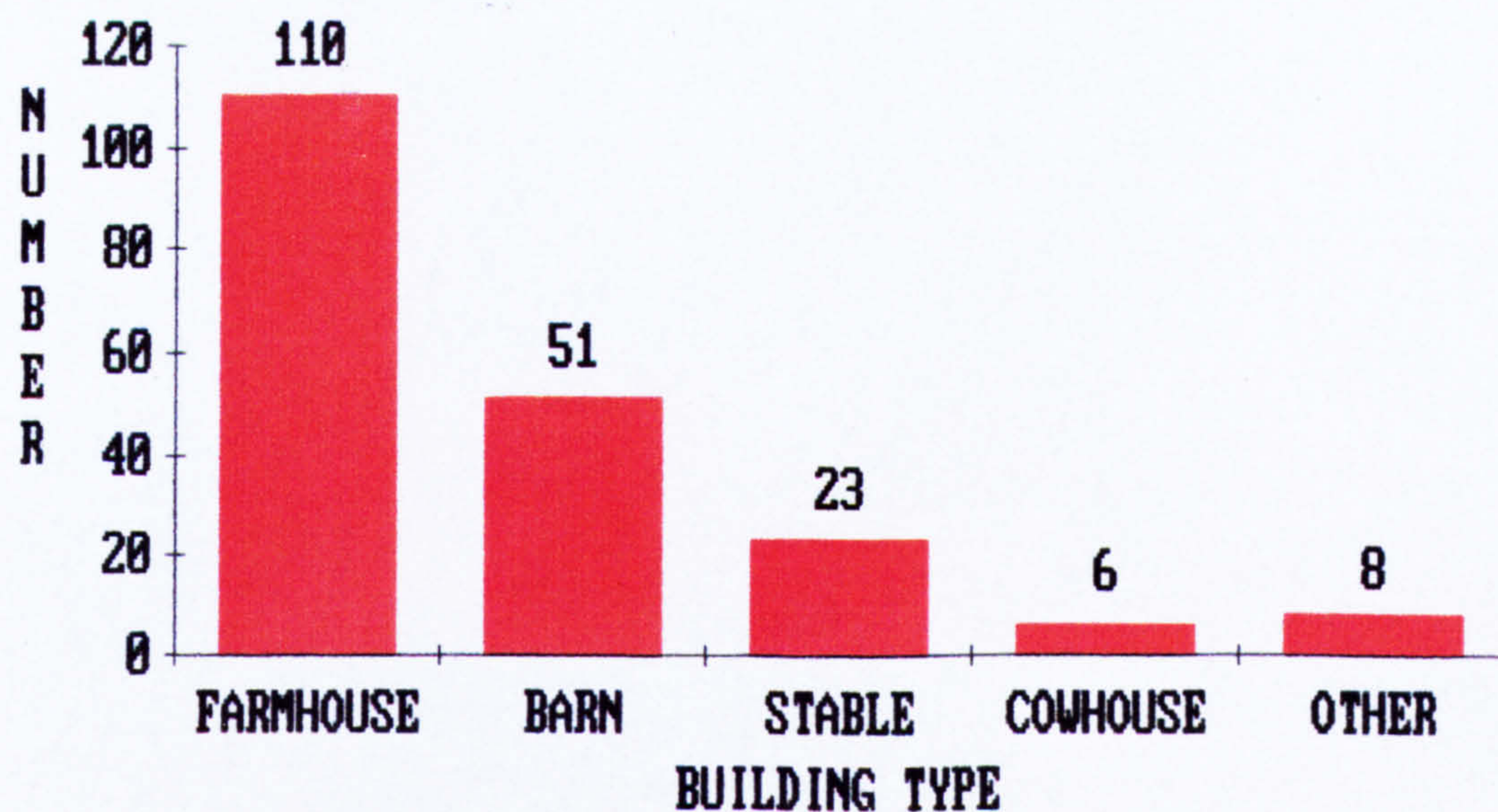


FIGURE 8.4 TYPES OF LISTED BUILDING: DERBYSHIRE DALES





Tynedale District provides evidence of spatial variation in listed farm buildings. In total the district has 470 listed farm buildings (Appendix H), with a density of 0.21 per km<sup>2</sup>. This is low in comparison to other areas but is not surprising given that Tynedale is part of the sparsely populated Cheviot region (Map 8.1). The highest concentrations of listed farm buildings are in the vicinity of major settlements, particularly in the 'Tyne Gap'. By contrast the remote northern half of the district has concentrations of listed TFBs below 0.3/km<sup>2</sup>. The distribution of population and farming activity, as influenced by the topography, appears to be the main factor in determining the distribution of listed farm buildings. The extent of causal linkage depends on the view taken of environmental determinism.

In so far as listing indicates heritage value, the conclusion must be that TFBs of heritage value are not common in the Pennines. The concentration of listing on farmhouses means that the majority of conversions will not involve buildings of recorded heritage value because such developments are usually in non-residential buildings.

While many TFBs are not outstanding structures in themselves they do have collective value as part of a landscape heritage. This is not considered during listing (Richards 1982 p9). Thus the heritage value of TFBs is really much greater than the statutory lists suggest. This point needs to be considered when comparing heritage and other values.

## **8.7 Educational Value**

The educational value of TFBs derives from their historic and architectural aspects. However it is possible to identify education as a formal value. For example, the Norfolk Historic Farm Buildings Project has produced a resource pack on farm

buildings. In addition, museums in converted farm buildings (chapter 6) offer educational opportunity.

## 8.8 Landscape Value

Up to this point the chapter has concentrated on the more quantifiable and readily understood values of TFBs. However, their retention is often justified on the grounds of landscape value, the consideration of which requires the acceptance of philosophical considerations.

The Ribble Valley B.C. Development Control Guide serves to emphasize the widely held view that farming is the crucial element in the rural landscape: "farming and forestry ... are the main influence on the appearance of the countryside." The crucial question to be answered is the extent to which TFBs are an important element of this value. Landscape value is frequently cited as a reason for conservation of the buildings but there has been little attempt to identify the components which make up this value.

The value of farmed landscapes has been a fundamental element in the designated area approach of post-war planning policy. For example, the Dower report envisaged National Parks, as areas where: "the characteristic landscape beauty shall be preserved" (1945 p15). Leaving aside the definition of preservation, landscape was recognised as a fundamental aspect of conservation. Since National Parks are largely farmed landscapes, TFBs must be regarded as a prime focus for conservation. This was a view which received official expression in the Hobhouse Report which identified the value of the Dales as being both natural and man-made:

"The natural beauty of this area is worthily matched by its traditional architecture of local stone with stone-slate roofs. From castle to barn, from the Middle Ages to the mid 19th century, this fine building has developed in harmony with its landscape setting." (Hobhouse 1947 p98).



In the Peak District the committee concluded that "the essential background of the Peak District providing its vitality and much of its beauty, is the farm." (Ibid p92). In this context the designation of Areas Of Outstanding Natural Beauty in the Forest of Bowland and the North Pennines would seem to be a bit of a misnomer. Both landscapes are predominantly man-made. For instance, in Teesdale the numerous white washed farmsteads clearly dominate the landscape. Similarly the Yorkshire Dales has been described as "one of the finest and most distinctive cultural landscapes in Europe" (Mercer and Puttnam 1988 p67).

There is official recognition of the value of landscape in policy documents and designated areas, with some attempt to consider the make-up of the wider landscape which, by implication, includes the farmed landscape. Problems of definition, coupled with the great age of the landscape, have tended to restrict policy initiatives to a general rather than specific level, although buildings have been afforded greater protection through listing and Conservation Area designation. However Shoard (1981) argued that this is because they are easier to define, not because they have greater value. Wilkinson attempted to identify the elements of landscape value as follows: "landscape quality is dependent upon visual harmony, diversity and the juxtaposition of both natural and man-made forms, as displayed in shape, colour, size and texture." (1987 p44).

Such a definition is a prerequisite to an evaluation of landscape value. Landscape includes both artistic and functional aspects and can be defined as: parcels of land, formed of a combination of components, which together make an identifiable space. Thus any consideration of TFBs must account for the fact that they are just one component of a diverse landscape.

Having defined the nature of the landscape resource and its importance in policy making, the next stage is to try to identify the various aspects of the landscape value

of TFBs. The economic spin-off from the landscape is perhaps the most tangible function to establish. It is important to stress that this economic benefit is not that derived directly from the farm buildings (as in section 8.2 to 8.4), but relates to the activities which they attract into the area by virtue of their contribution to attractive landscapes. These activities are principally tourism, in-migration and business ventures.

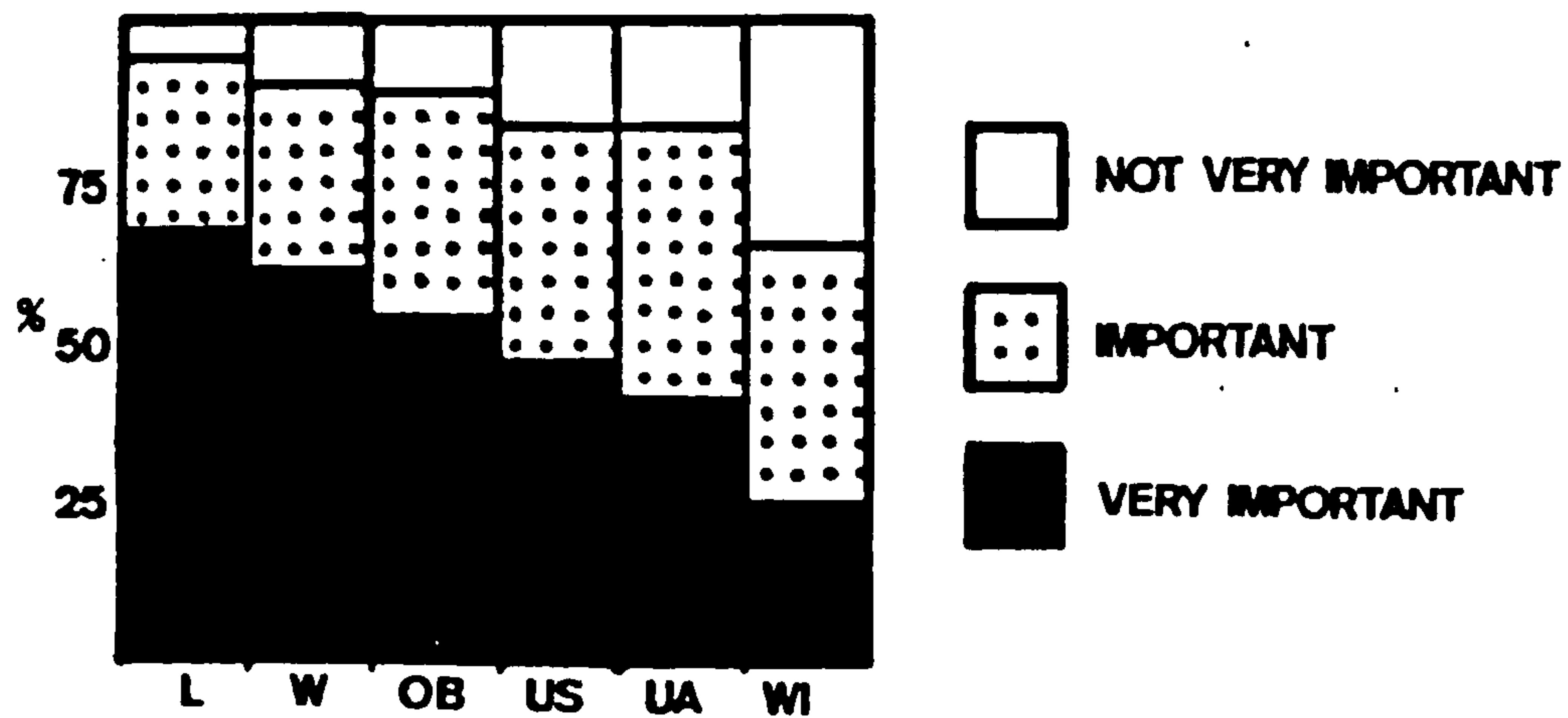
### **8.8.1 Farmed Landscapes as an Economic Stimulus**

The subjective nature of landscape appreciation means that a recognition of its economic benefits is important in justifying policy. Tourism and business activity make an obvious contribution to the economy of the Pennines (chapter 6). Therefore the establishment of a link between landscape and these activities indicates a second, but less measurable, form of economic value for TFBs. Establishing such a linkage depends on answering two questions. Firstly does the landscape stimulate economic growth by acting as an attraction to tourist and business activity and, secondly, if such a relationship exists, what is the significance of TFBs within the landscape value?

Considering the first question, evidence is provided by a number of research projects conducted on visitors in the Pennines. The Peak District National Park conducted a survey of 14 856 visitors between June 1986 and April 1987. The results of this survey clearly demonstrated the value of landscape, with 66% of respondents naming 'distinctive landscape' as a prime motive for their visit (fig 8.5). Similarly an English Tourist Board (ETB) commissioned study of rural tourism found that 70% of staying visitors saw the "natural scenery" as important in their decision to visit an area (PA Consultants 1987 p22). These findings were backed up by Hill who concluded that 71% of upland farms had the potential to cater for visitors attracted into the area by the scenery (1985 p7). Drawing this evidence together the ETB concluded that "The main attraction of the countryside is the landscape" (1988 p3).



**FIGURE 8.5 CHARACTERISTICS APPRECIATED  
BY VISITORS TO THE PEAK NATIONAL PARK**



L – LANDSCAPE  
W – WILDLIFE  
OB – OLD BUILDINGS AND ARCHAEOLOGY  
US – UNSPOILT SETTLEMENTS  
UA – UNCOMMERCIALISED AREA  
WI – WILDERNESS

SOURCE: PEAK PARK JOINT PLANNING BOARD 1989 p18

The degree to which visitors contribute to the local economy is open to question. In the case of the Peak survey visitors were predominantly day-trippers, who invariably make a smaller per capita economic contribution than overnight visitors. Nevertheless by spending an estimated £75 million per annum they still made a significant contribution to the local economy. This was new money brought in from outside which would not otherwise circulate to local benefit. At the same time landscape was listed as an important attraction to the area. It is therefore possible to identify a correlation between landscape and revenue from tourism, a relationship which can justifiably be applied to the whole Pennines (Peak Park Joint Planning Board 1989 p18).

Another element of considering the economic value of landscape concerns the attraction to footloose business activity. Chapter six outlined how firms have been locating in TFBs. The main questions to be addressed are: Does the landscape play any role in attracting businesses? Is there a specific attraction in locating in a TFB or is the motivation related more to the general attraction of the rural environment? In some cases it is clear that the distinctive character of a TFB can act as a selling point for a company, providing a distinctive identity and character not attainable in standard business premises.

The chance to live and work in the countryside acts as an attraction to high calibre staff. Equally a pleasant environment can lead to job satisfaction and provide a productive setting in which to conduct business. The case studies outlined in chapter 6 provide good examples of such benefits. Equally, the scale of rural in-migration indicates the preference for rural living amongst large sections of the middle classes. Companies which are not constrained by locational factors are likely to move to rural environments, subject to the availability of suitable premises. Conversions cater for this need by facilitating development in situations where new buildings would not be permitted on planning grounds.



Plate 8.1 The Barns and Walls Panorama of Swaledale in the  
Yorkshire Dales (SD 889 987)



Plate 8.2 'Golding Constables Flower Garden' Note the Barn in  
the Near Background



Source: Taylor 1973 p36



Some businesses utilize the landscape resource itself. For example the use of TFBs as an outdoor pursuits centre at Falstone in Northumberland would seem to fall into this category. The activities utilize many components of the farm landscape.

### **8.8.2 Traditional Farm Buildings in the Landscape**

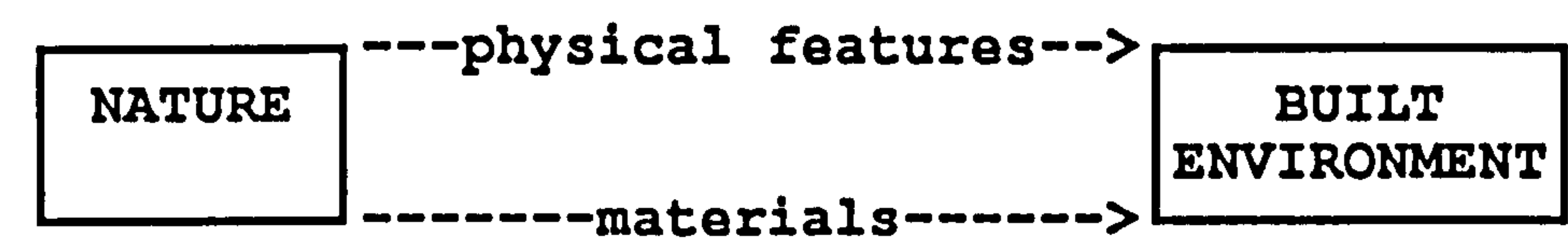
Having established a link between landscape and economic activity there is a need to address the second question outlined in 8.8.1, namely, the significance of TFBs within the landscape. In areas such as the Dales (plate 8.1) it is clear that buildings are an important component of landscape quality, and that there would be a radical alteration of landscapes were the barns to disappear.

Buildings contribute to the regional identity of the landscape. For example in Northumberland the wide expanses of open country are given a focus by the large compact farmsteads. More specifically a survey in the Peak District National Park found that over 50% of visitors viewed 'old buildings and archaeology' as 'very important', indicating the landscape role played by TFBs (fig 8.5). However such comment is not very informative about the true nature of the relationship between TFBs and the landscape. This requires a breakdown of those elements which compose landscape value and, more specifically, the relationship between man-made and natural features.

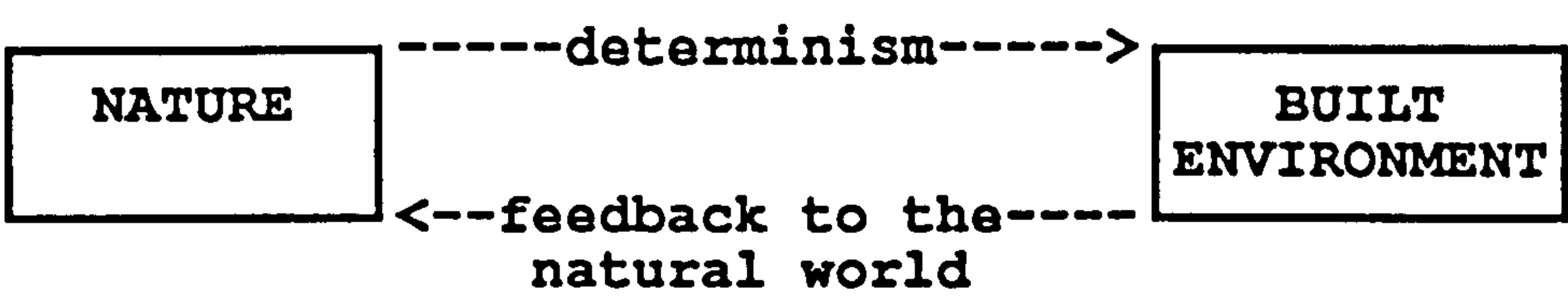
Figure 8.6 demonstrates the strong influence that the natural environment exerts on building patterns and design. The strength of this relationship is open to question and would seem to fall well short of determinism. The case of Heathery Burn farm (chapter 6) provides a good example. Although situated on the upper limits of cultivation the immediate reasons for the failure of this farm business were as much due to market fluctuations, as they were to adverse physical conditions. While the



Figure 8.6    The Relationship Between The Built and Natural Environments



Feedback Mechanisms To The Natural Environment





environment will inevitably influence building patterns and design, as in the case of Bank Barns (chapter 5), environmental determinism can be largely discounted.

Figure 8.6 suggests that there is a feedback linkage whereby the use of local building materials and styles both complements and enhances the natural landscape by giving it a distinctive colour, texture and form. Such a linkage underlines the important role played by TFBs in the landscape and, by implication, the landscape value of TFBs. The Prince of Wales echoed the views of many in describing the landscape role of TFBs: "They are very much of the land and of the materials closest to hand". He felt that the best of them seemed "to rise out of the landscape" (1991 p12). In this context it is possible to identify both a passive role, whereby the buildings blend into their landscape, and an active role, where buildings make a positive contribution to the landscape.

Taking the former point, it is commonly accepted that age helps to blend buildings into the landscape. Fading materials and the growth of moss and lichen help to absorb a building into the landscape (plate 7.2). The familiarity bred by time leads to the acceptance of such buildings as a component of the landscape. Consideration of the time horizons thus begins to question the common principle of seeking to minimise change during conversion. Even radical changes can become accepted with the passage of time.

TFBs also play an active role by enhancing and complementing the landscape. This can best be illustrated by using the Dales as a case study. The visual amenity of natural features such as rock escarpments is re-enforced by the use of local building materials in farm buildings and walls. Similarly, the field barn system (chapter 5) both complements and reinforces aspects of the landscape. Plate 8.1 shows how the change from in-bye land (7) to rough grazing defines the break of slope, while the barns add a focus to an otherwise open landscape. Such a positive relationship is by



no means unique to the Pennines. For example Crowe and Mitchell concluded that harmony within a landscape served to increase its "visual richness" (1988 p21).

Applying principles of landscape assessment to the Dales it is possible to identify a framework provided by the walls, with field barns acting as focal points in the landscape (plate 8.1). Darley appreciated the point by concluding that the Dales would be "dull green valleys" were it not for the barns (1988 p7). Similarly, the Barns and Walls Conservation Officer felt that: "the barns and walls transform what would otherwise be a fairly bleak landscape, provide a focus of interest and are of great historical importance" (Davenport 1990).

To summarize, TFBs both complement and enhance the landscape. This two way relationship clearly has important implications for conservation. If it is accepted that conservation value relies on the farming systems, it could be argued that the best way of protecting structures would be to conserve the systems. The ESA's and Barns and Walls Conservation Scheme (chapter 7) represent a step in this direction. However there must be doubts about the justification for trying to preserve past farming systems as their modern equivalents may have similar value to future generations.

Despite such reservations TFBs are valued both within and outside the farming community as one Dales farmer stated: "These barns are a feature of the Dales and people from all over the world come to see them. Everything should be done to maintain them" (Davenport 1990). Such sentiments apply throughout the Pennines both within and outside the farming community.

### **8.8.3 Artistic Value**

Having established a linkage between landscape and traditional farm buildings it is valid to attribute an element of artistic value to the buildings. Constable's portrayal of



the English countryside is a good case in point, as exemplified by plate 8.2 with its emphasis on the threshing barn in the near foreground.

The romantic poets derived much of their inspiration from farmed landscapes, particularly in the uplands, the works of Wordsworth and Coleridge being fine examples. Obviously it is difficult and somewhat puerile to try and ascribe artistic inspiration directly to TFBs. However, the following quote from Wordsworth indicates the significance of the traditional farmed landscape:

"The solid mountains shone, bright as the clouds,  
Grain-tinctured, drenched in empyrean light;  
And in the meadows and the lower grounds  
Was all the sweetness of a common dawn-  
Dews, vapours and the melody of birds,  
And labourers going forth to till the fields."  
(Watson 1970 p96)

These 'associated values' are clearly important but they tend to be appreciated mainly by an aesthetically aware minority and end up being marginalised in the face of the practical elements of policy implementation (chapters 6,7). For example it is difficult to convince farmers of the need to conserve seemingly useless buildings simply because of their landscape value. However, there is no doubt that such 'associated values' exist. Consideration of them leads into a range of philosophically based values relating to TFBs (Fig 8.1).

## 8.9 Philosophical Value

Philosophical values are regarded as the moral basis and principles which underpin other aspects of value. As such they require an in-depth study to achieve a full evaluation of the conservation and conversion of TFBs. The main philosophical values can be summarized as: value by association, the ethical arguments behind the subject and the essential ambience surrounding TFBs.



### 8.9.1 Values of Association

The regional and cultural association of TFBs has been discussed previously. Such buildings also appeal to basic human needs for permanence, security and nostalgia, many of them still functioning after centuries of use. To urban visitors this apparent stability and timelessness forms a stark contrast to the pace of re-developments that have changed the face of many built-up areas. There is a prevailing nostalgia for the traditional countryside which can be partly explained as an attempt to find security in an uncertain world by returning to the roots of society. The views of visitors can be particularly poignant for, as Jackle outlines, they are the only people for whom the main reason for travel is the search for a "unique place experience" (1987 p8). To the visitor facilities such as farm shops and cafes are associated with the enjoyment of holidays and leisure time. Jackle points out that "meanings are attached to places according to the expectations people develop in their repeated rounds of place encounter" (1987 p5).

Similar values also apply to the farming community to whom places have distinction both visually and mentally, in terms of the memories and associations evoked. To the farmer these processes often engender nostalgia and a desire to conserve links with the past, such as farm buildings. The case of Bishop Field Farm (chapter 6) illustrates this point. Here the motivations for conversion were influenced by a strong sense of place going back three generations, leading the farmer to comment that:

"There is no way that I want to leave Bishop Field so I'm determined to work hard ... to show that there are other ways of making money from a farm than those which have been accepted over the years" (LLewellyn 1986 p24)

In a similar fashion, the symbolism of permanence and security was given as a prime reason for farmers participating in the Dales Barns and Walls Conservation Scheme. The words of Lowenthal and Binney summarize these relationships: "In a world



grown so strange, we hunger for the sense of permanence that tangible relics can best provide" (1981 p19).

### 8.9.2 Ethics

Ethical values in the subject relate especially to the principles of antiquarian prejudice and authenticity. Taking the first issue there is a need to assess the ethics which underlie the desire to conserve old structures. Ethical reasons can motivate the desire for conservation and can even provide a justification for conserving old buildings, even when no clearly defined contemporary use seems to be available.

#### 8.9.2.1 Antiquarian Prejudice

Conserving heritage for future generations is an important ethical consideration for both TFBs and the wider conservation movement. However alteration, and in some cases destruction of TFBs can be defended in several ways. Firstly, change has been an ongoing process, as the example from Allenheads demonstrates (chapter 6). In addition, TFBs are functional buildings, providing a clear justification for positive re-use, even if it means compromising their appearance.

There are a number of ethical arguments against conversion. Shoard contends that landscapes and their inhabitants are so closely linked that any loss of landscape amenity impoverishes both present and future generations: "We are in part the places that have shaped our lives. If England's landscape is impoverished, so are our personalities" (1981 p106). Looking more specifically at farm buildings The Prince of Wales voiced similar concerns worrying that "we will bequeath to our descendants a legacy of quite extraordinary ugliness and insensitivity" (1991 p14). The Northumberland Estate stressed their aim of maintaining the appearance of the estate both for the present and future. In essence this preservation bias opposes the claim that conversion helps to save TFBs and serves to demonstrate the lack of consensus



on the acceptability of conversion. Such arguments are however largely a matter of degree.

Prevailing values also change through time, so that what is deemed acceptable today may not be so at some future date. For example preservationist views prevailed in the 19th century, with writers such as Ruskin denouncing restoration of historic buildings because "They are not ours. They belong partly to those who built them, and partly to all the generations of mankind who are to follow us." (Prince 1981 p45). Such extreme views are unlikely to commend themselves to the majority, but they do illustrate that values change. It is possible to envisage a future situation where residential conversions, however well designed, may be seen as unacceptable. Such a consideration raises the ethical question of authenticity.

#### **8.9.2.2 Authenticity**

The importance of authenticity depends on the difference between physical appearance and values assigned by the human mind. The basic question is, if we know that a converted building is no longer fulfilling the function which its appearance suggests and if we know that it is redundant in terms of its original economic role, does it still have the values of a TFB?

The answer to this question depends on the criteria used for evaluating buildings. If landscape and 'associated values' are the main criteria then authenticity is less important. Views dominated by these considerations would regard the building as having limited value. However if functional, historic and architectural values are important then authenticity becomes more relevant. Even with the best conversion design, a building may lose some of its value if it is stripped of its architectural and historical context and setting.



It is questionable whether the conscious deception involved in conservation and conversion is necessary or justified. The majority of conversions are unlikely to deceive people that buildings are continuing as farm buildings. In this context, the use of design skills to maintain the pretence of continued agricultural use becomes questionable. Particularly as anything other than the highest quality design runs the risk of producing a poor imitation of TFBs.

### 8.9.3 Ambience

Even with high quality design the loss of the essential ambience of TFBs may reduce the value of conversions. The issue of ambience is one of the most philosophical considerations (Fig 8.1). It may seem far removed from the economic considerations outlined at the start of the chapter yet it is a crucial issue. For without this essential ambience attempts at conversion and conservation would seem to be futile. In this context, the Prince of Wales described a Gloucestershire barn which he said; "lifts my spirits ... and ... makes me feel happy" (1991 p12). A comparison of a working barn (Plate 5.5) and a residential conversion (Plate 6.2), demonstrates the importance of this issue. Even a high quality conversion has failed to preserve the essential atmosphere of farm buildings. The rugged appearance of a working building inevitably contrasts with the clinical organisation of a house.

## 8.10 A Summary

By following the format laid out in figure 8.1, this chapter has demonstrated that TFBs have values ranging from clearly identifiable economic considerations to the more abstract philosophical and ethical aspects. Put simply there are two main types of value: functional and aesthetic. In turn, these are largely influenced by the distinction between the value of the buildings and the value of activities associated with them. However, such divisions are far from clear. Landscape value generates tourist revenue while, simultaneously, TFBs enhance the landscape. Aesthetic



considerations can have functional connotations while in turn functionality can lead to aesthetic benefits.

In assessing the relative values of functional and aesthetic considerations it must be remembered that these are working buildings, prompting Harvey to conclude that; "there cannot be many branches of architecture in which form follows function as closely and as uncompromisingly as in the design of farm buildings" (1970 p18). Given this background, the emphasis on finding new positive uses (chapters 6,7) is understandable, particularly as difficulties in identification and quantification have often served to marginalize the aesthetic values of TFBs. However, evidence suggests that aesthetic qualities are valued very highly by most interested parties. The majority of TFBs are not of outstanding historic or architectural interest. Nor are they ever likely to fulfil an economic role greater than of local importance. By contrast, aesthetic qualities can be of fundamental importance as in the case of the Dales landscape which has been described as: "one of the most outstanding and distinctive in Western Europe." (Yorkshire Dales National Park Committee 1988). In this case, aesthetic considerations would seem to be of paramount importance. Yet it is only recently that these aesthetic qualities have been given recognition at the policy level, with the establishment of the Barns and Walls Conservation Scheme and ESA's (chapter 7). Beforehand they received only general recognition. This situation contrasts with the strong emphasis placed on practical conversion and economic re-use throughout the 1980's (chapter 6).

Simultaneously, economic pressure and environmental concerns have led farmers to respond to agricultural policy changes (chapter 4) which place a greater emphasis on aesthetic considerations, for example ESA grants concentrate on supporting traditional features and activities.



In the Pennines there was a broad consensus of opinion on the importance of the landscape, historical and archaeological values of TFBs. However there was disagreement over the 'practice' of conservation and conversion, with business pressure ensuring that farmers placed a greater emphasis on functional as opposed to aesthetic values. As Davenport stated: "when one is hacking out a living on unforgiving upland areas aesthetic quality is not always uppermost in one's mind" (1990). The consensus amongst farmers was that aesthetic considerations should not get in the way of development but that every effort should be made to minimize the impact of conversions.

Compared with farmers and landowners Pennine planning authorities placed a higher priority on aesthetic considerations. However the policy climate of recent years has emphasised functionality and made it very difficult for planners to prove "demonstrable harm" and thus justify decisions purely on aesthetic criteria. Visitors to rural areas viewed the aesthetic role as of paramount importance, as exemplified by the survey data presented in 8.8.1.

TFBs have a value which goes far beyond their direct economic role. Research suggests that more intangible aspects such as landscape are the most important values.

As Lowenthal and Binney concluded:

"Preservation's ultimate rationale lies beyond such economic benefits ... It is the less tangible realms of national identity and personal connection with the past which give our material heritage its major value. These attributes cannot be quantified, but they enrich the environment and the quality of life, and animate the entire preservation movement" (1981 p176).

Such concepts are difficult to evaluate, control and measure. This presents problems when an attempt is made to apply them to policy and practice because, as Ormsbee stated: "they escape from our rationalistic strongholds, directly back to our emotions and therefore out of our control" (1961 p20).



By demonstrating the aesthetic and functional values of TFBs in the Pennines this chapter has established the rationale behind conservation and conversion. In broad terms such an evaluation can be applied to the policy and practice of conservation and conversion. This is a theme which is continued in the conclusion to this thesis.



## Notes to Chapter Eight

### 1. Size of Farms as Socio-economic Indicators

Size is not a good measure of the importance and prosperity of hill farms. This is because rough grazing land can cover extensive areas but has limited stock carrying capacity. For example, one Dales farm surveyed was quite large at 425 hectare. However 76% of this was rough grazing land.

### 2. Restrictions on Farm Operations

Under the 1988 General Development Order livestock may not be housed within 400 metres of residential buildings. So residential conversion other than for family or friends can impose severe restrictions on farm activities. This is a particular problem to the predominantly livestock Pennine farms. Such situations also raise the danger of nuisance litigation relating to environmental health controls.

### 3. Greater Financial Margins for Non-Primary Production

In recent years non-primary production has tended to enjoy an increasingly advantageous financial position compared to agricultural production. The problem for agriculture has been that the cost of inputs has risen faster than prices at the farm gate (MAFF 1990). One reason for the development of a farm hotel at Bishop Field was that in the farm business "income had remained static, but overheads have gone up." (Stokoe 1987 p1).

### 4. Tourist Development Action Programmes (TDAPs)

TDAPs have been established in many areas, Kielder in Northumberland being an example from the Pennines. The ETB (1988) have outlined the aim of the programmes:

" A TDAP is a co-ordinated partnership involving both private and public sectors intended to develop tourism activity and expenditure through development, marketing and other initiatives over a short period."

### 5. Tom slates

These are thicker and more uneven than modern standardised slates.

### 6. Criteria for Listing

The principal criteria for listing are: age, completeness, architectural quality, group value and association. Landscape factors are not considered, which means that isolated barns are judged entirely on their individual age and architectural quality (Richards 1982).

### 7. In-bye land

This is improved and enclosed pasture on hill farms. Usually found on the lower slopes, the land is normally separated from rough grazing by an 'intake wall'.



**Chapter Nine**  
**Conclusion**



## **9.1 Introduction**

The aim of this thesis is to evaluate the conservation and conversion of traditional farm buildings (TFBs), emphasising the comparative importance of: physical, socio-economic and aesthetic values.

To achieve this evaluation the thesis has followed a logical format. After outlining the methodological and theoretical background it has considered the physical resource of TFBs and the processes of conservation and conversion, before discussing the values of TFBs in chapter 8. This conclusion discusses the relative and collective importance of these values based on the three hypotheses outlined in the introduction. Together these indicate the type and scale of the significance of conservation and conversion of TFBs in the Pennines.

## **9.2 The Conservation and Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings in the Pennines: A Summary**

Considering the size of the resource available for conservation and conversion, around 2000 Pennine TFBs (25%) could be redundant and perceived as having real potential for development. In view of the varying perceptions of farmers and the composite nature of many of the buildings (chapter 5), this figure is likely to be a considerable under-estimate of the true position.

Surveys suggest that a majority of TFBs seen as having potential for development were redundant, although this is as much a perceptual as a practical issue. Most so called redundant buildings are in some kind of low level use. The principal reasons for redundancy were farm modernisation, isolation and structural problems. Put simply, a majority of Pennine TFBs are ill suited to the requirements of modern farming often being small, geographically dispersed, having few services and being



built in ways which are incompatible with modern farming methods, especially the use of machinery (chapter 5).

Some of these factors also militate against their conversion because the major end-uses almost invariably require a higher level and quality of services and access compared with agricultural uses. The main types of conversion are residential (56%), tourist accommodation (24%) and business (20%). In addition, the rate of conversion has been increasing (fig 6.9). Such findings confirm national figures, although the proportion of residential conversions is somewhat lower compared to tourism and business developments, perhaps reflecting the remoteness and tourist appeal of the region.

Case study evidence suggests that most conversions fall into one of two extreme categories. Either they are carried out by wealthy estates on an in-hand basis (1), where the survival of a farm business is not at stake. On the other hand there are the small farms where conversion is to residential use, generates insignificant returns on investment, or is ruled by limited financial resources.

There appears to be a vicious circle whereby financial hardship amongst farmers has increased interest in the possibility of conversion, but where the initial capital needed to stimulate conversions which generate a worthwhile return is often not available. Most conversion projects require considerable venture capital. Rarely is this readily available and there is an understandable reluctance to borrow heavily to finance such investment and risk taking.

Pioneering schemes aimed at conserving TFBs (and other elements of the farm environment) have been afforded a high profile by policy makers, the Barns and Walls Conservation Scheme (BWCS) being a case in point (chapter 7). In reality,



*Therefore*

such schemes have limited resources and spatial extent. As such, the most important conservation measures are those carried out as part of normal farm operations.

The situation outlined above falls short of the governments policy objectives (chapter 6). It does not satisfy the aims and aspirations of the main actors involved with TFBs. Policies have been aimed at supporting farm incomes (through diversification, conversion and conservation), in the context of agricultural adjustment and the reform of the CAP described in chapter 4. Incentives for conversion such as the Farm Diversification Scheme, have been matched by government pressure on LPAs to adopt a more liberal approach when considering applications for conversion. As a consequence the rate of conversion has increased but this has not proved to be a satisfactory method of preserving existing farm systems. Nor have they produced the wider socio-economic benefits envisaged by government policy documents, mainly because of the concentration on residential conversion.

The realities of conversion rarely match the aspirations of either farmers or LPAs, both of whom emphasised aesthetic and social criteria (fig 6.3 and fig 6.6). Economic reality and government planning guide-lines rather than the aspirations of those actively involved with TFBs, have dictated the course of conservation and conversion. Recent policy changes (chapter 6) make it likely that non-economic criteria will be afforded a higher priority in the future.

It seems that the realities of conservation and conversion in the Pennines reflect national trends (table 6.2). However the emphasis on functionality and commercial ventures in converted TFBs seems particularly out of place in the Pennines. This is because isolation often reduces the conversion options, while the TFBs of the region have a particularly high scenic value compared to many other parts of the country. Especially those areas where the impact of modern agri-business has served to reduce the number and value of TFBs.



In the Pennines there is a need for a re-appraisal of the types of conversion being undertaken and of the relative importance attached to conservation as opposed to conversion.

### **9.3 The Relationship Between Conservation and Conversion**

True evaluation is only possible if the relationship between conservation and conversion is fully understood. This section draws on research evidence to assess the extent to which conversion can represent a legitimate method of conserving TFBs. This principle has been central to the growing debate on the subject with conversions being justified on the grounds that they facilitate the conservation of TFBs. Circular 8/87 appears to accept the principle in stating that "New uses for old buildings may often be the key to their preservation" (DOE 1987c). The question of whether conversion really represents a way of conserving TFBs hinges on the relative values ascribed to the various factors involved.

As physical structures Pennine TFBs can often be converted with only limited impact on landscapes, although associated features such as parking facilities can be more problematical. Close to, the impact of conversion is more difficult to conceal, as the design of TFBs is generally incompatible with most non-farm uses (especially residential use). Even with good design, no Pennine examples had managed to preserve the essential ambience which surrounds working farm buildings (chapter 6). The neat, ordered appearance of residential and commercial conversions cannot recreate the disordered functionality of working farm buildings. This calls into question the value of even the best designed conversions.

Economic value is a second criterion by which to judge the success of conversion in conserving TFBs. Viewed in purely economic terms the conversion of TFBs usually



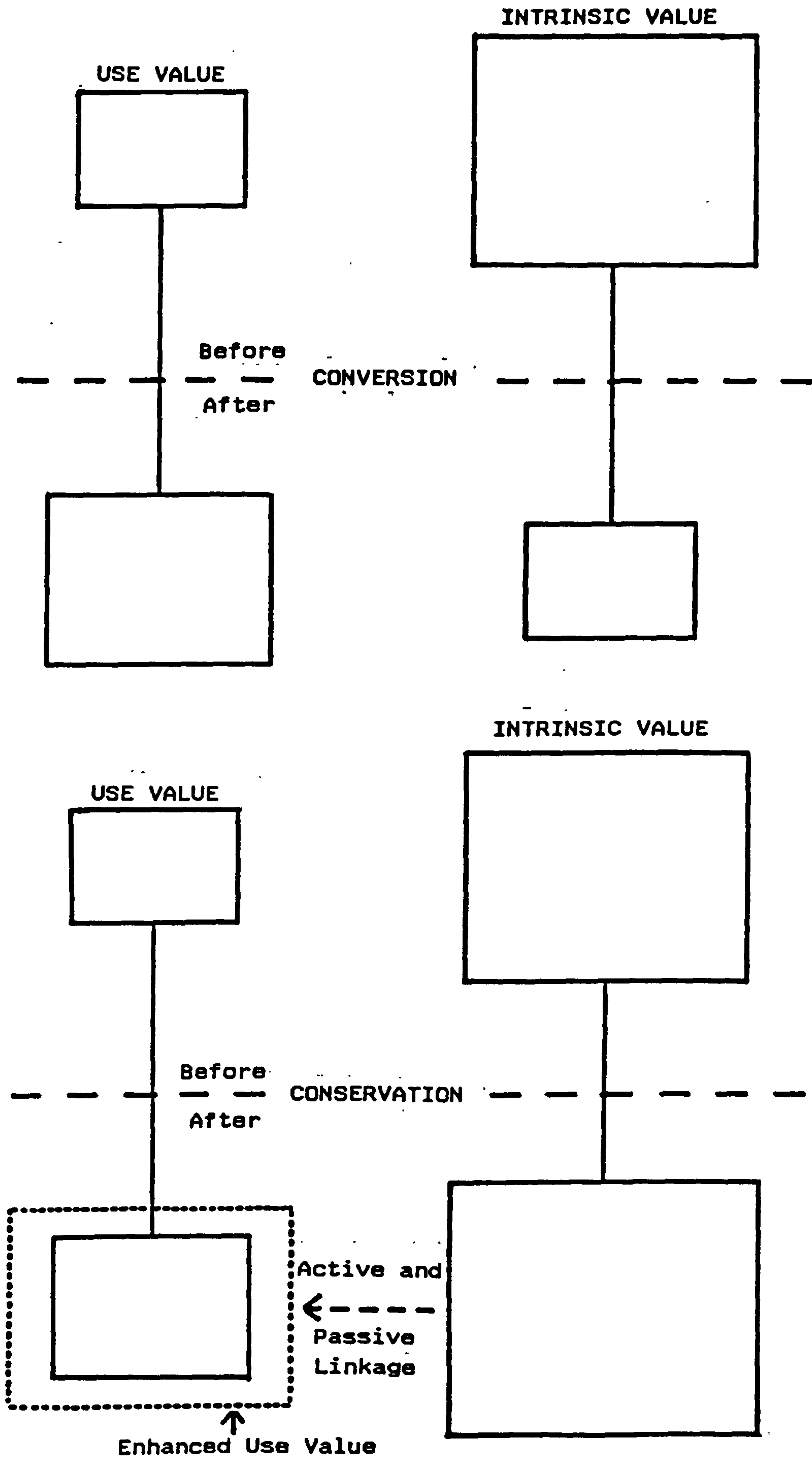
enhances their value (fig 9.1). The replacement of primary production with value added activities or residential use can produce economic benefits for both the individual farm and the local area.

By virtue of their role in farming TFBs contribute to the maintenance of traditional farming communities and associated social structures. Equally, conversion can have profound social implications. For example, residential conversions offered on the open market tend to stimulate in-migration and thus alter the social structures of many rural areas. Many such incomers are from urban backgrounds and hold values which may be at odds with those of traditional rural communities.

The various criteria for judging the relationship between conversion and conservation present a confused picture. Skilled design makes it possible to retain many specific architectural features (often of heritage value). It is even possible to maintain the wider landscape appeal of TFBs. However, conversion invariably loses some of the essential atmosphere and ambience associated with TFBs. In other words, the buildings may remain interesting and pleasing to the eye, but they are no longer fully compatible with their context and setting. As economic units, conversion changes and usually enhances the value of TFBs. In social terms conversion can radically alter the social structures with which farming is associated.

Considering all these criteria it can only be concluded that conversion is rarely a satisfactory method of conserving either the form, function or context of TFBs. This conclusion seems destined for wider acceptance following the 1990 English Heritage statement which concluded that residential use was incompatible with the features of TFBs. Such a conclusion challenges a major principle behind recent policy and practice and alters the basis on which to evaluate conservation and conversion.

Figure 9.1 The True Value of TFBs Before and After Conservation and Conversion



N.B. Box size is proportional to value



## **9.4 An Evaluation of the Conservation and Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings**

The remainder of the chapter draws on earlier findings, particularly the values outlined in chapter 8, to evaluate the conservation and conversion of TFBs, thereby addressing the questions: why is it important to convert and conserve; and what are the wider implications of conservation and conversion. The evaluation is based on the 3 hypotheses outlined in the introduction:

The conservation and conversion of TFBs in the Pennines needs to be valued on aesthetic, philosophical and social criteria, as well as by economic factors.

TFBs have both intrinsic and use values which make their conservation desirable even without a positive use.

The conservation and conversion of TFBs in the Pennines has value at a farm, area, regional and national level.

### **9.4.1 The Conservation and Conversion of TFBs in the Pennines Needs to be Valued on Aesthetic, Philosophical and Social Criteria as Well as by Economic Factors**

The discrepancy between economic (functional) and non-economic values of TFBs has been an emerging theme in the thesis. Chapter 6 outlined the emphasis on functional reuse of TFBs. This has been the focus of government policy over recent years. However, field evidence revealed a surprisingly high priority being given to social, philosophical and aesthetic criteria amongst both policy makers and practitioners (chapter 8). Assessment of the relative merits of the various types of value facilitates an understanding of the nature and true value of the conservation and conversion of TFBs in the Pennines.

Such an assessment must begin by looking at how the various interested parties evaluate the conservation and conversion of TFBs. Chapter 6 outlined how farmers and their representatives hold what Newby (1979) called a 'functional aesthetic' view. Many farmers demonstrated a deep affection and care for their environment

(including TFBs) of the sort that can only come with prolonged and close association with the land. Such views were inevitably tempered by economic reality. Hence the general preference for residential conversion with its rapid returns and limited investment needs. However, Table 6.3 suggests that such a preference was not typical of the wishes of most Pennine farmers. In general farmers were in favour of most development options for TFBs but felt that every effort should be made to minimize their impact both visually and socially.

Pennine LPAs stressed environmental policies and priorities and thus placed a much greater emphasis on the aesthetic and heritage values of TFBs (fig 6.6). This seems rather out of step with a central government policy which has increasingly stressed the need for planning authorities to allow conversions wherever possible. However, it could represent a reaction against the worst excesses of conversion, brought about by the liberalisation of planning controls (Chapter 6).

Variations in the level of implementation of government policy by Pennine LPAs suggest that there are intra-regional differences of implementation of conservation and conversion policies and advice. A number of LPAs promoted local policy objectives which contrasted with mainstream planning policies (chapter 6). In many cases these represented a reaction to physical and administrative variations on the ground (chapter 5,6 and 7). An example is the Yorkshire Dales National Park where there is a huge legacy of field barns which have a restricted modern role. Despite the expression of local viewpoints, LPAs are ultimately accountable to central government. Several large landowners expressed the view that the support given to conversion by central government meant that local planning policies were not important since permissions for conversion were likely to be granted on appeal.



Despite the fact that Pennine LPAs emphasize non-economic values in their policies, the realities of planning decisions, are usually decided on conversion and development needs.

Relevant agencies and pressure groups (Chapter 6) tend to be orientated towards either development or conservation interests. The activities and influence of such organisations reflects the changing principles and priorities regarding conservation and conversion. The recent emphasis on rural development and conversion (chapter 6) has resulted in an increasingly active role for agencies such as the Agricultural Development and Advisory Service (ADAS) and the Rural Development Commission (RDC), through the Farm Diversification Scheme (FDS) and Rural Development Programmes (RDPs) respectively.

However, the increasingly powerful environmental lobby has begun to question the emphasis on the development of TFBs. Chapter 6 outlines how the Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE) and English Heritage have called for a more selective approach to conversion, with a greater emphasis being placed on aesthetic criteria. Such viewpoints seem to be destined for wider acceptance and are likely to conflict with the socio-economic remits of the RDC and ADAS despite the view of the RDC chairman that:

"We must not allow two visions of the countryside to develop: the green and pleasant land which people visit and fantasize about and the place where many people live and work and which has to pay for its upkeep" (RDC 1991).

There is a recognisable dichotomy of interests and associated policies between the various actors in conservation and conversion. The balance between the varying viewpoints has changed under the influence of central government policy and the prevailing views of society. Hence conservation and aesthetic values are now being

given a higher priority, as the initiatives outlined in chapter 7 illustrate. This both reflects and gains credence from the increasing emphasis being placed on aesthetic and environmental criteria in society as a whole.

The changing values outlined are further complicated by the relationship between the policy and practice of conservation and conversion. The final sections of chapter 6 discuss the emergence of a dichotomy between the policy (and its perceptual base) and practice of conversion. For some time both local and national policies have been based on the assumed socio-economic value of conversion. The emphasis has been on business conversion. For example PPG 7 stressed that "There are often opportunities for re-using existing buildings or adapting them to new commercial, industrial, residential or recreational uses" (DOE 1988a p3). Such advice puts business uses first. However, in the Pennines such uses were the least common type of conversion (fig. 6.8). Government policy on conversion appears to have been formulated on the basis of the perceived economic value (use value [fig 9.1]) to be derived from business led conversion. To achieve this end incentives for conversion have been introduced, such as the Farm Diversification Scheme. Simultaneously LPAs have been urged to relax planning controls in order to facilitate conversion. The problem is that demand for conversion has been dominated by residential end uses (fig 6.8). These generate significant revenues (Appendix I) but do not usually have the wider, long-term socio-economic benefits envisaged by government policy (chapter 6). Thus policy guidance aimed at facilitating a particular type of development has in reality allowed a quite different type of situation to develop, where the socio-economic benefits are far from clear.

Drawing on the preceding discussion and the data presented in chapter 8, the remainder of this section outlines the relative importance of aesthetic, philosophical, social and economic values in the conservation and conversion of TFBs in the Pennines.



In purely economic terms it was estimated that conversions might generate around £8-£9 million direct income per annum for Pennine farmers, with around two thirds of this figure coming from residential conversion (chapter 8 and Appendix I). Considering the size of the survey region (13 878 km<sup>2</sup>) and the number of farms (approximately 3500), the returns from conservation and conversion seem relatively small. However if average incomes from hill farming are considered then agriculture in the region may only generate approximately £62 million and on this basis some conversions could be expected to have local and area significance.

At the individual farm level residential conversion can generate significant returns. A price of £100 000 for a property with the benefit of planning permission for conversion is quite possible in some areas, with little investment needed. However such prices represent a one-off payment with limited benefits to the wider local economy. Commercial conversion options tend to fall into one of two categories. On the one hand, many conversions make few demands on the resources of the farm, but show limited returns, Camping Barns being a good example (net annual incomes can be only around £500). At the other extreme there are conversions which generate significant returns but which require investment levels which are high enough to be beyond the means of many Pennine farmers. Examples in the Pennines (chapter 6,8) suggested that commercial enterprises arising from conversion could rarely be incorporated into fully functioning farms. Thus the overall economic benefits were somewhat negated by the reduction in farming activity.

Evidence leads to the conclusion that the returns from a majority of conversions are inadequate to support a farm family without other supplementary sources of income. Most are either 'one-off' sales for residential use or they generate limited returns. Similarly, payments for conservation under the schemes outlined in chapter 7 are little more than pocket money in the context of the whole farm turnover.

The conservation and conversion of TFBs begins to take on greater significance when indirect and non-economic values are considered. Chapter 8 identified a number of examples of such secondary influences amounting to a multiplier effect in the local economy. Such benefits can be traced back in a complex and almost limitless chain, whereby additional employment and capital are generated in a local economy. Figure 8.2 demonstrates the complexity of such relationships, many of which are difficult to prove or measure. These indirect values are now widely recognised in policy statements and reflect the basic premise of PPG 7 that "the best protection for the countryside is a healthy rural economy" (DOE 1988a p1). However, the use of such considerations in practical decision making has been minimal.

Although the heritage value of certain TFBs has long been recognised through the system of listing (Appendix H), non-economic (aesthetic, social and philosophical) values are often marginalised in the face of business pressure. Yet such values may be as, if not more important than economic value (chapter 8). It can easily be overlooked that many such intangibles can have complex indirect economic values of their own. For example, there is undoubtedly a link between landscapes (of which TFBs are an important component) and tourism with its related economic benefits. Would parts of the Yorkshire Dales give so much pleasure and attract so many visitors if it was not for the intimate pattern of walls and barns which typify its landscape? Thus, non-economic values such as landscape can ultimately lead to enhanced economic benefits (fig 9.1). The problem arises in proving and measuring such relationships. Evidence in chapter 8 suggests that TFBs both complement and enhance the landscape. Such conclusions are reinforced by fig 8.5 which indicates that TFBs are seen as an important element of the Peak District landscape and therefore contribute to the estimated annual income of £75 million from day trippers in the area (Peak Park Joint Planning Board 1989 p18). Similarly TFBs of architectural and historical value can contribute to the tourist appeal of an area.



TFBs and their associated landscapes also enhance economic activity rates (fig 9.1). Most policy makers and practitioners stressed the importance of pleasant working environments and the high quality of life for firms establishing themselves in converted TFBs. For example, PPG7 alluded to the "clean and healthy environment" which attracts firms into rural areas (DOE 1988a p3). In addition, location in TFBs can improve a company's image by providing a stimulating and distinctive environment in which to conduct business. Unfortunately such relationships are difficult if not impossible to quantify.

Even if such linkages are discounted, non-economic values are still significant. In a society with increased leisure-time, pleasing landscapes, architectural and historic heritage, and their associated philosophical values (chapter 8) gain added importance. Similarly the high priority now being afforded to environmental conservation means that it should not be necessary to establish direct economic values in order to justify policy making and practical decisions regarding TFBs. However, it is difficult to make crucial decisions on notions such as the social value and ambience surrounding TFBs (chapter 8). Yet evidence from the Pennines suggests that even those most practical of people, the farmers, regarded such aesthetic and philosophical values as important.

The major consideration is the relative importance of non-economic and functional (largely economic) values of TFBs and also, how this is reflected in current policy and practice. Evidence from chapter 8 suggests that conservation programmes have had limited success in preserving traditional farming units. At the same time the scale of direct benefits indicates that most developments in the Pennines only have local, farm level economic significance. Detailed consideration of the complex indirect economic values changes this conclusion somewhat, as the following sections outline.

Non-economic values seem to have a much wider importance. Such factors are central to the aspirations of the major actors with both Pennine farmers and LPAs listing aesthetic values as the most important considerations in conservation and conversion (fig 6.3 and fig 6.6). Likewise some of the philosophical values outlined in chapter 8 appeal to the most fundamental human instincts, such as the need for security, permanence and identity. What really raises the importance of non-economic values is that landscape, heritage, social and philosophical values have national and even international importance. What is more, they are valued highly across a broad spectrum of society. For example, Pennine landscapes were appreciated by landowners, planners and tourists who together represent a substantial cross section of society. Similarly, the association of TFBs with permanence and security applies to both farmers and visitors, although the origins of such sentiments vary. For the farmer they represent their close and historic link with the land, while for the urban visitor such sentiments may be indicative of a reaction against the rapid pace of change in urban areas.

The response to the hypotheses outlined at the start of this section must be that an evaluation of the conservation and conversion of TFBs in the Pennines needs to include aesthetic, philosophical and social criteria. Indeed, when all considerations are taken into account these non-economic factors would appear to be more important than economic values.

Such conclusions are only partly reflected in policies. Economic pressure means that the policy and practice of conservation and conversion is largely driven by business considerations. Direct and often short term economic gain have been the main objectives. Yet these represent only a small proportion of the true value of TFBs (fig 9.1). The emergence of initiatives such as the Barns and Walls Conservation Scheme and the increasing value put on environmental quality by society may herald a partial



change in direction away from the previous notions of conversion to positive uses being the best method of conservation.

Research suggests that the various aspects of value (functional - non functional and economic - non economic) are represented by two types of value. These are the intrinsic value of TFBs (largely non-economic) and the use value of TFBs (largely economic). The relative merits of these values is discussed in the next section.

#### **9.4.2 TFBs Have Both Intrinsic and Use Values Which Makes Their Conservation Desirable Even Without a Positive Use**

TFBs have an intrinsic value as structures in their own right. Many policy makers and practitioners recognised such intrinsic qualities of TFBs (figures 6.3 and 6.6). Unfortunately, such views were less prominent during the actual processes of conservation and conversion. The question is whether this represents a marginalisation of such values in the face of economic reality or whether it is simply that the intrinsic values of TFBs are taken for granted and do not need identification.

Evidence from the Pennines confirms the latter <sup>possibility</sup> situation, with decision making often being based on an assumed value of TFBs. Indeed, the whole question of conservation and conversion would seem to be based on the intrinsic qualities of TFBs. Otherwise why commit huge resources (chapters 6,7) to ensuring sympathetic design, maintenance and repair of TFBs. For example, traditional stone roofing slates can cost in the region of £300 per ton, making re-roofing very costly compared to the use of modern alternatives. The retention of traditional materials and features suggests that the intrinsic value of TFBs may be both individual and collective. It has already been stated that the individual heritage value of TFBs is limited (Appendix H). Therefore the main intrinsic value of TFBs would seem to be their collective value through contributions to landscapes and the associated aesthetic and philosophical values.

The inherent value of TFBs provides an important, but often undefined, *raison d'être* for the attention paid to conservation and conversion by policy makers and practitioners. At the same time it exerts an influence on the types and styles of developments which they see as acceptable.

The division between use and intrinsic values is not clear-cut. In reality intrinsic features have both passive and active economic values. The former involves TFBs and associated landscapes acting as positive attractions to in-migration, tourists and many businesses (chapter 8). The latter entails the active promotion of TFBs as, for example, a selling point for farm based tourist accommodation enterprises (chapter 6). Thus the intrinsic values are interrelated with, and enhance, use values (fig 9.1) and it cannot be concluded that the two are separate, conflicting or irreconcilable.

Despite such linkages there is still a need to afford the intrinsic value of TFBs a higher priority in the policies relating to conservation and conversion. Formal recognition of the inherent qualities of TFBs needs to be improved beyond the present concentration on listing and prior notification in National Parks (chapter 6), which under-represent the true non-economic value of TFBs, especially as landscape quality is not a criterion for listing (Appendix H).

Decisions on conservation and conversion are dominated by use values. Intrinsic values merit a higher priority in the decision making process. It is only by achieving this that it will be possible to reduce the damage and loss of the inherent qualities of TFBs which often accompanies conversion. For example, residential conversion opportunities may be marketed on the basis of the inherent qualities of a TFB, appealing to incomers searching for the rustic home of their dreams. Reality suggests that many such conversions lose some, if not all, of the valued features of a TFB (fig 9.1). For example, the English Heritage (1990) statement 'The Conversion of Historic



Farm Buildings' cites a number of examples where buildings have been de-listed following residential conversion and this does not even account for damage to TFBs wider aesthetic and landscape value. Affording intrinsic values a higher profile in planning and rural development policy would be extremely difficult. But it could involve stricter design controls and total removal of permitted development rights, especially for applications concerning listed buildings. These could be combined with positive incentives through selective grants and loans, of the sort which have been introduced to encourage the conservation of TFBs (chapter 7).

Chapter 7 outlines how the intrinsic value of TFBs has been receiving some recognition through a number of schemes offering grants and annual payments for the repair and maintenance of TFBs which are retained either fully or nominally in agricultural use. Most such schemes have either a limited spatial extent, as in the case of the BWCS and ESAs, or offer grant levels which are insufficient to tempt farmers to carry out anything other than basic first-aid repairs (which usually would have been done anyway). Effective conservation of Pennine TFBs would need higher levels of grant than the 35% currently paid for the repair and maintenance of TFBs under the Farm and Conservation Grant Scheme (2). However, the limited budget and over-subscription in the BWCS calls into question the feasibility of applying such measures to a wider geographical area. This is particularly so in view of the continuing emphasis on use values, principally direct economic benefits. Financial payments for conserving the intrinsic features of TFBs would have to be substantially raised if such considerations were to take precedence over profit making conversions, many of which compromise the inherent qualities of TFBs.

It can be forcibly argued that the intrinsic values of TFBs are often greater than their use values. This is receiving increasing, but still partial, recognition. A true reflection of intrinsic value in the process of conservation and conversion would require a huge investment of resources which could only come with a radical re-orientation of policy

and practice. Financial incentives (from public sources) for conservation of TFBs would have to be high enough to offset the profits which accrue from less desirable conversion options, such as residential use (Appendix I). In view of the difficulties facing many hill farmers and the higher profile being afforded to environmental matters, such financial assistance is conceivable. In this context, schemes such as the ESAs and BWCS could be viewed as precursors to other initiatives covering a wider geographical area. In reality, such large scale conservation initiatives are unlikely to succeed due to the largely functional outlook of Pennine farmers, limited resources and the prevailing emphasis on free market economics. In addition, there are political problems in gaining acceptance of schemes associated with paying out large sums of money to subsidise the retention of largely unviable structures. In many ways this is the nub of the problem. The general attitudes of society still make it difficult to justify major decisions on aesthetic (intrinsic) criteria alone despite the fact that it can be demonstrated that such factors often have considerable economic spin-offs. For example, the involvement of English Heritage in the BWCS was based on the perceived financial value of historic landscapes in terms of: tourist revenue, recreation and employment.

Taking a long term perspective the inherent qualities of TFBs should be given a higher profile than use values. This conclusion is illustrated in figure 9.1. However, the preoccupation with short term practicalities and prevailing values makes such actions extremely unlikely on anything other than the limited scale and spatial extent already practiced.

#### **9.4.3 The Conservation and Conversion of TFBs in the Pennines has Value at a Farm, Area, Regional and National Level**

It is possible to look beyond the largely theoretical consideration of relative values and assess their importance at the farm, area, regional and national scales. This



enables the value of TFBs to be set in the context of wider agricultural and rural developments.

The hypothesis raises 3 main questions, namely:

- a) the effects of conservation and conversion on farm businesses;
- b) the contribution such developments make to the local and regional economy
- c) whether conservation and conversion has national significance.

Case study evidence presented in chapter 6 discredits the popular notion of conversion helping to sustain fully functioning family farm units. Those enterprises which generated returns high enough to support a family farm seemed to fall into one of three categories. Sometimes the farming unit had ceased to exist. In other cases the farm unit was still intact but farming had ceased, with the business in converted TFBs becoming the principal source of income and employment on the farm. In slightly less extreme cases farm operations had been reduced in scale (often to part-time status), making farming more of a hobby than a business.

Such findings seem to conflict with government policies which openly or tacitly stress the importance of supporting traditional farming units and associated rural communities (chapter 6). The extent to which such policy goals have been achieved really depends on the relative importance attached to the farming activity and to the viability of family farm units as structures in their own right regardless of productivity. The latter would seem to be the more important consideration because of the combined effects of low returns from upland agriculture (£8800 [MAFF 1990], the declining role of agriculture in rural communities and the need to reduce EC farm production (chapter 4). The retention of family farm units helps to preserve the social continuity of an area and retains a population largely sympathetic to the inherent values of TFBs. Besides which, cessation of farming activity does not necessarily

reduce the economic activity rate from the land as it is normally sold on to other, often more enterprising farmers, an example being Bishop Field Farm (chapter 6).

Chapter 8 discusses the notion of the philosophical values of TFBs at the farm level. Figure 6.3 emphasises just how important TFBs and their associated landscapes are to farmers, providing an historical context, sense of inheritance and identity.

At the farm level the conservation and conversion of TFBs has value both in economic and non-economic terms. By providing additional income and work it can help to preserve family farm units. However this is usually on a part-time (low income) basis or gives rise to the cessation of farming activity. Cote Bank Farm (chapter 8) is a rare example of dual occupation. However, at this farm, labour resources were stretched to the limit, it being admitted that inadequate resources were being invested in the farming side of the business due to work on tourist accommodation ventures

The extent to which conservation and conversion has economic value at the area and regional level is dependent on a combination of direct and indirect values. The limited amounts of hired labour used in the case studies (chapter 8) suggests that enterprises in converted farm buildings are rarely likely to generate much employment. However, the actual processes of conversion and many conservation measures generate work for local tradesmen.

In view of the limited financial returns on many conversion enterprises (chapter 8) it is necessary to consider indirect economic benefits if the local and regional value of conservation and conversion is to be assessed. Figure 8.2 demonstrates how conservation and conversion generates indirect economic benefits both directly from the business and indirectly via employment. Considering the first point, spending by the occupants of converted TFBs can be significant at a local level. This applies



particularly to business conversions which use local services (chapter 8). Unfortunately benevolence is not always possible in private business and harsh economic reality leads to the use of cheaper outside services. This represents financial leakage out of the local economy (figure 8.2).

On balance, almost any conversion of a TFB will generate a net increase in economic activity over previous farm usage. The use of hired labour and spending on local services and tradesmen can significantly boost the economic activity of an area. Concurrent with such economic benefits come social benefits as services are supported and enhanced for the benefit of the wider community. For instance, Greenwood (1990) cites an example of a school near Alston in the North Pennines where in-migration into converted TFBs had helped to keep the local primary school open. Thus the area/regional value largely depends on indirect values.

Despite such benefits, a number of factors serve to limit the importance of conservation and conversion at an area and regional level. Firstly, upland farms are rarely prosperous and are relatively few in number (Appendix I). As such, the returns from on-farm alternative enterprises invariably have only a limited impact in a regional context. Combined with the diminished role of agriculture in rural economies, this serves to limit the likely significance of farm developments. Many new enterprises generate low returns (Chapter 8, Appendix I). Those that offer more tend to be associated with a concurrent reduction in the farm business, with possible detrimental effects on other elements of the rural economy. Most developments are residential which do not yield long-term direct incomes and where profits are likely to remain on the farm.

Thus, despite a net economic benefit to the rural economy, conservation and conversion does not constitute a panacea to solve the socio-economic difficulties of rural areas. Economic benefits from conservation and conversion are rarely at a high

enough level to stimulate significant rural development in the Pennines either at an area or regional level. The case of Allenheads described in chapter 6 demonstrates the higher and more sustained level of investment and commitment needed to stimulate successful rural development in just a small area of the Pennines. A number of respondents expressed the view that policies needed to be re-orientated away from their present concentration on farm based development towards help for the wider rural community. Linkages are difficult to establish but there seems little doubt that in some cases financial assistance given for on-farm development (such as through the FDS) would have generated greater benefits if it had been invested in the wider rural economy. This prompted the RDC to conclude that "The issue ... is not so much the diversification of farm businesses as the diversification of rural economies" (1991 p8).

To some extent, non-economic values can be said to compensate for the limited economic returns at the area and regional level. TFBs contribute to regional and intra-regional identity. For example chapter 8 describes the importance of TFBs in many of the distinctive landscapes of the Pennines. Such landscapes are valued by locals and visitors alike and have economic spin-offs as outlined in section 9.4.2. By supporting and enhancing local services and infrastructure, conversions can have social benefits for the wider community. Viewed in the context of the changing countryside (chapter 4), the increasingly cosmopolitan, enterprising and diversified rural economy associated with conservation and conversion, would seem to be preferable to the traditional insularity of under-resourced rural communities.

Viewed on a national scale the economic benefits of individual TFBs are marginal. As much higher levels of economic development are found outside the Pennines. In addition there are relatively few buildings of outstanding heritage value (Appendix H). Thus the principal national value of Pennine TFBs is collective, through their contribution to quality landscapes. An example being the Yorkshire Dales field barns



described by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Committee (1988) as "one of the most outstanding and distinctive in Western Europe".

Assessing the validity of the hypothesis outlined at the start of this section, it is clear that conversion invariably generates a net increase in economic activity. However, the scale of those benefits is limited. Bankrupt farms are unlikely to become profitable because new uses have been found for TFBs. Neither are depressed rural economies likely to see a significant revival of fortunes through such measures. The main values of TFBs at the regional and national level are non-economic, principally aesthetic and philosophical associated with heritage and landscape. At the farm and local level, economic values have significance but even at this scale it is dubious whether they outweigh non-economic considerations, the value of which is often damaged by conversion work. It is almost inevitable that residential conversions destroy the physical and aesthetic qualities of TFBs and it takes sensitive design to limit the damage. Thus conservation measures are far more likely to maintain and enhance the true value of TFBs. This calls into question the continuing emphasis on economic uses in both policy and practice.

## 9.5 Summary of Evaluation

Drawing together the three elements of value, it is possible to come to conclusions about the nature and importance of conservation and conversion of TFBs in the Pennines and on this basis to formulate recommendations for future policy directions.

Two types of value have been identified: the intrinsic value of TFBs and their use value. The former incorporates aesthetic, philosophical and social values while the latter include direct and indirect economic values.

The diversity of these values and the linkages between them makes measurement and comparison difficult. However the great value placed on the aesthetic aspects by locals, visitors, policy makers and practitioners suggest that the intrinsic values of TFBs are considerable. This is particularly true when the intangible economic linkage with intrinsic features (such as the economic value of landscapes) are considered. By contrast the economic value of TFB conversion is limited and unlikely to make more than a modest impact on the economic problems facing farming. Similarly it does not provide a major vehicle for rural development where the major initiatives probably lie off the farm.

These conclusions suggest that policy and practice should place greater emphasis on conserving and enhancing the intrinsic qualities of TFBs by giving priority to their: landscape; historic; architectural; philosophical and social values. To date, conversion has been given priority over conservation (chapter 6) reflecting the emphasis on functionality and the dominance of market forces, hence there is a dichotomy between the true value and the values on which policy and practice are based. Evidence in chapter 6 suggests that the policy and practice of conservation and conversion does not always reflect the true aspirations of all interested parties but, tends to be driven by the realities of private business. Re-orientation of policy and practice is needed so as to recognise the regional and national importance of the intrinsic values of TFBs. At present such values are being sacrificed in order to achieve limited economic gains which fall far short of those envisaged by policy makers. Evidence suggests that the economic returns from conversion are insufficient to justify the damage that many conversions inflict on the inherent qualities of TFBs. This is essentially the same argument that concerns the whole environmental movement namely, that resources need to be evaluated on wider criteria than purely short term or market economics.

This has begun to happen on a limited spatial extent as the schemes outlined in chapter 7 demonstrate. Wider adoption of such ideas seems plausible in view of the



increased emphasis now being placed on environmental matters generally. The conclusion challenges the established emphasis on use values and functionality. Indeed it needs to be argued that factors such as landscape and heritage value can have a functional role by generating economic activity and by virtue of their social and philosophical connotations (chapter 8). Even though it is difficult to put a price on such considerations acceptance of such value in society could go a long way to ensuring the conservation of TFBs.

Such a change of direction is necessary if the conservation and conversion of TFBs is to reflect their true value to society and not condone or subsidise their continued erosion. Conversion and agricultural use have their part to play but there is a need for continued and increased public funding for TFB conservation in order to recognise the true value of the buildings as structures in their own right. This would also allow farmers to realise their true aspirations regarding TFBs (largely conservationist rather than having their actions dictated by financial pressure).

## **9.6 Recommendations**

Evidence presented in the thesis enables the following recommendations to be made concerning the policy and practice of conservation and conversion of TFBs in the Pennines.

### **9.6.1 The Basis of Policy and Practice**

In the light of historical evidence, present trends in conservation and conversion should not always be viewed as a permanent or one-way processes.

In some cases there is a need to adopt a positive approach to conversion, allowing new and imaginative styles and uses.

Changes in policy and practice need to recognise that conversion is rarely a satisfactory method of conserving the inherent characteristics of TFBs.

If there is a conflict of interests conservation needs should take priority over conversion.

There is a need to amend planning and rural development policies to give less emphasis to farming and put more weight on facilitating wider rural socio-economic development.

Both policy and practice have to be changed to reflect the true value of TFBs with an emphasis on intrinsic values rather than use (economic) values.

Such a change in emphasis requires a reduced emphasis on functionality (in its most practical form) in policy and in practice.



### 9.6.2 The Operation of Policy and Practice

There is a need for local policy formulation so as to take account of regional and intra-regional variations. Development Plans provide a vehicle for expressing this need.

Incentives for conversion need to be increased but be more selective in order to address the dichotomy between policy, which emphasises non-residential uses, and practice which is dominated by residential end use.

There is a need for a better co-ordination of schemes and incentives relating to TFBs in order to reflect their true value and facilitate desirable end uses.

Planning policy need to distinguish between end-uses and place a greater emphasis on aesthetic criteria through usage and design controls.

Such aims can best be achieved through mainstream planning and agricultural policies rather than through a designated area approach of limited spatial extent.

Market forces cannot dictate a course of conservation and conversion which accurately reflects the true value of TFBs. More wide ranging but selective planning controls and increased public funds are needed to maintain and enhance the true value of TFBs without placing an undue financial burden on farmers.

## Notes to Chapter Nine

### 1. In-hand

Work carried out directly by the estate on untenanted land.

### 2. Farm and Conservation Grant Scheme

As of 1991 the Farm and Conservation Grant Scheme and the Farm Diversification Scheme have been amalgamated, with a variable grant (15 to 50%) being payable on investment upto £85 000.



## Appendices

Appendix A      Survey Region

District	% of District in Region	Area of District in Region (km2)
Berwick	33	322
Alnwick	60	649
Tynedale	65	1444
Castle Morpeth *	25	155
Carlise	20	206
-----		-----
Cheviot		2776 km2
Eden	28	604
Carlise	13	134
Wear Valley	70	354
Derwentside *	20	54
Teesdale	90	759
Tynedale	35	777
-----		-----
North Pennines		2682 km2
Richmondshire	90	1186
Craven	80	941
Harrogate	80	1067
South Lakeland	15	233
-----		-----
Dales		3427 km2
Craven	20	235
Lancaster	60	346
Ribble Valley	70	405
Pendle	100	168
Burnley	100	118
Hyndburn *	100	73
Rossendale	100	138
Blackburn *	90	124
Chorley *	40	82
Rochdale	50	80
Bury *	50	50
Bolton *	40	56
Oldham	50	71
Tameside *	20	21
Bradford	40	148
Calderdale	65	237
Kirklees	40	164
Leeds	20	112
-----		-----
South Pennines		2628 km2



Barnsley	30	99
Sheffield	60	221
High Peak	100	541
Stockport *	30	38
Macclesfield *	20	105
Congleton *	00	00
Staffs Moors	45	259
East Staffs *	15	58
Derbyshire Dales	100	796
Amber Valley	40	106
NE Derbyshire	50	139
Chesterfield *	05	03
-----		-----
Peak District		2365 km2

\* peripheral or largely urban districts not surveyed

## **Appendix B      Farmer Questionnaires**

A postal questionnaire survey of farmers was conducted in the Pennine region, with pilot surveys being undertaken in the North York Moors and Dartmoor regions. Both of these regions are similar to the Pennines, being extensive upland areas with a sparse population, mostly livestock farming and designations such as National Parks and LFA's.

Both pilot surveys covered 20 cases, being undertaken in May and September 1989 respectively. The aim of the pilot surveys was to optimize the questionnaire design. The main changes introduced in the final version involved a reduction in the number of open-ended questions and increased structuring in the survey. For example, a grading system used in the North York Moors had to be dropped as it seemed to generate confusion amongst respondents. The clarity of terminology was also improved, such as in the adoption of redundant as an all encompassing term.

These refinements were applied during the main Pennine survey of 300 farmers for which the request for detailed information on farm characteristics was moved to the end of the questionnaire. Evidence from pilots was used to further categorize responses. For instance the previously open-ended question: "State any particular reason for not wanting to convert" was given four categories in the main survey: "social problems e.g. with tourists; financial reasons; business reasons e.g. lack of time; other (please specify)". Feedback from the pilots was an important element in designing the main survey.

This survey took place during January and February 1990, the timing being important to fit in with the farming calendar. A one month deadline was placed for returns but in practice the majority of late arrivals were incorporated into the survey results.

### **Sample Selection**

A systematic method of sample selection was developed using the farmer section of the 'Yellow Pages'. Within the relevant copies of the yellow pages the exchange areas covering the survey region were identified. In certain cases where only very small parts of an exchange were in the survey region, individual farms were identified and either included or discarded depending on their location.

The survey size was divided by the number of copies of Yellow Pages to be used, thus giving the number of cases per copy. This figure was then divided by the number of



relevant exchanges in each copy, to give the number of cases per exchange. Remaining odd numbers were allocated to exchanges using random numbers.

For each exchange within a directory the sampling started one page further on in the farmer's section. When and if the end of the farmer's section was reached, sampling began at the start again. Within each exchange sample the approach was to start one alphabet letter further on, after each case. This was important to reduce the regional bias associated with extended farming families.

The sample obtained by this method largely reflected the variations in population in the Pennines. For example, the remote Cheviot had 16 cases while the Peak had 68. Figure 9.3 demonstrates the levels of area representation.

The main survey gave the following sample. 9 directories were identified covering the survey area:

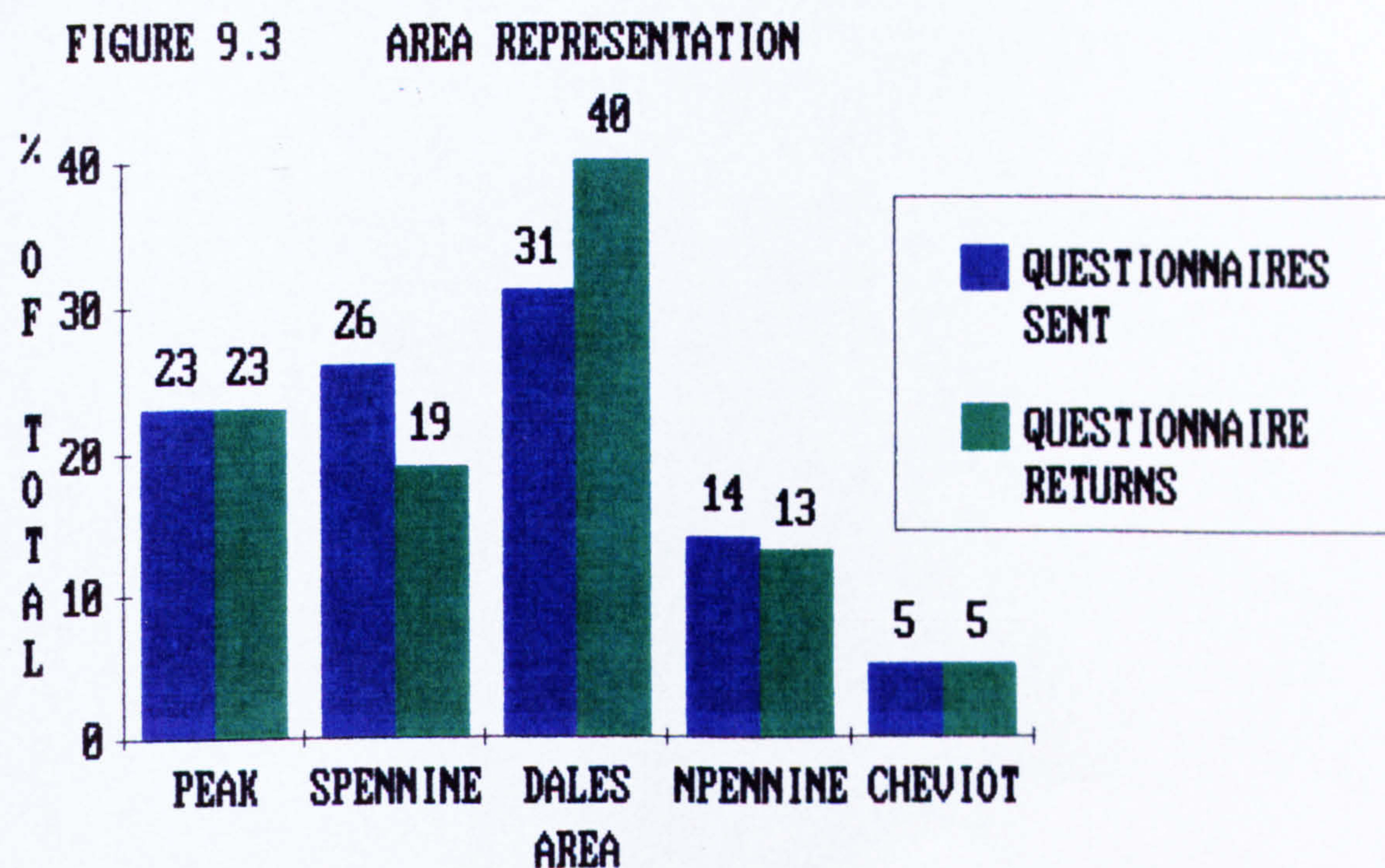
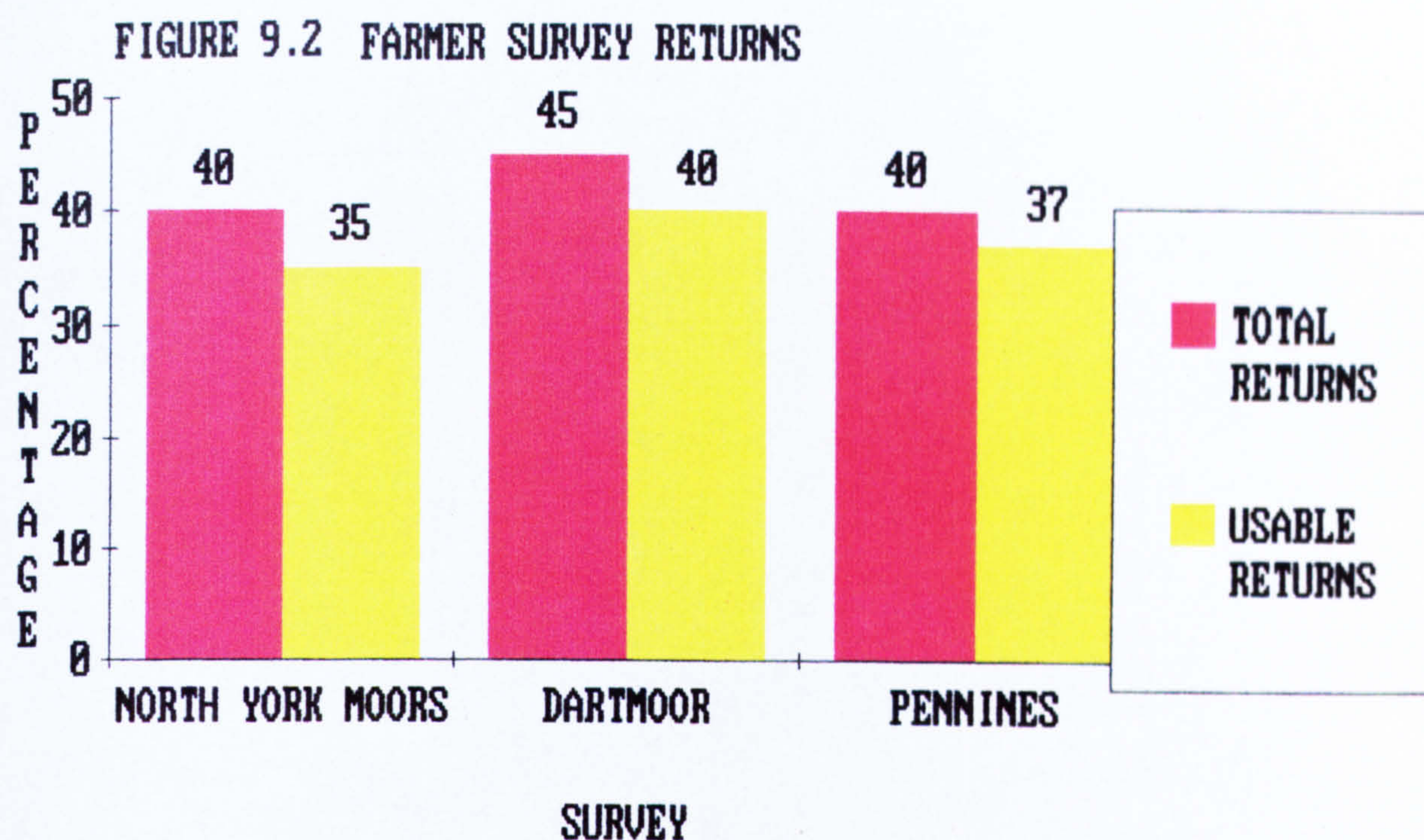
	No. of Cases
Newcastle upon Tyne	34
Cumbria and North Lancashire	33
Middlesborough	33
York	34
Bradford	33
Blackburn	33
Manchester North	34
Sheffield	33
Manchester South	33

300 sample / 9 directories = 33.33 cases

Thus there were 33 cases from each directory with a further 3 being assigned by random numbers. This gave the following regional breakdown:

Cheviot 16  
 North Pennines 43  
 Dales 94  
 South Pennines 79  
 Peak 68







## Returns (figs 9.2 and 9.4)

The returns are best broken down into survey areas:

Peak Region                      68 questionnaires  
    30 returns of which 26 were usable  
    = 43% total return  
    = 38% usable return

South Pennines                  79 questionnaires  
    21 returns of which 21 were usable  
    = 27% total return  
    = 27% usable return

Dales                                94 questionnaires  
    46 returns of which 44 were usable  
    = 49% total return  
    = 47% usable return

North Pennines                  43 questionnaires  
    15 returns of which 14 were usable  
    = 35% total return  
    = 33% usable return

Cheviots                            16 questionnaires  
    7 returns of which 6 were usable  
    = 44% total return  
    = 38% usable return

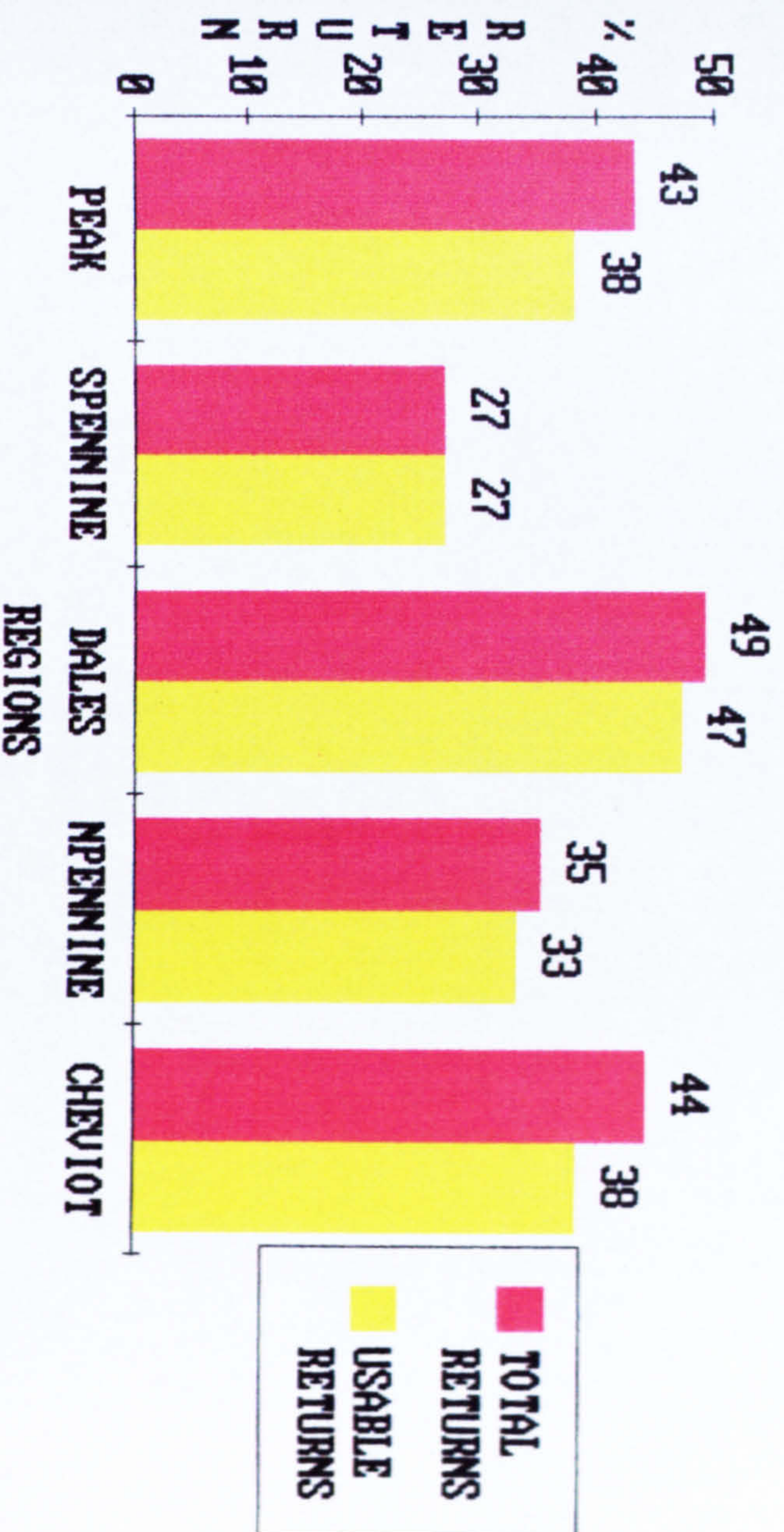
Total return = 40% Total usable return = 37%

Unusables: too late 3, personal/ ownership 3, insufficient data 2



FIGURE 9.4

AREA RETURNS (%)





## **Covering Letter**

The following is a copy of the covering letter used in the survey of Pennine farmers.

J R Mason,  
High Fellside,  
Middleton,  
nr. Sedbergh,  
CUMBRIA.

15th Jan 1990.

Dear J R Mason,

This is a questionnaire survey being carried out at Newcastle University into the conservation and re-use of traditional agricultural buildings.

The views of farmers and landowners are central to this theme and consequently your help in completing and returning the enclosed questionnaire would be much appreciated.

Your farm has been chosen as part of a sample from northern England. I do hope you can find the time to reply.

Thank you very much. N.B. Your questionnaire return will be anonymous.

Yours sincerely,

Roger Lawson.

## Pennine Farmer Questionnaire

The following is an example of the questionnaire used in the survey of Pennine farmers.

### SURVEY OF NON-FARM ENTERPRISES IN REDUNDANT TRADITIONAL AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS IN RURAL BRITAIN.

#### Please Answer All Questions

1. Do you have old farm buildings on your land which you think could have potential for conversion to non-farm uses, even if they are still in agricultural use? (Please describe)

2. Do you have any redundant farm buildings on your land?

- How many buildings ?
- What types of buildings ?

3. Please state the main reasons why they are redundant.

4. Which of the following non-farm ventures would you see as most suitable following on from a conversion?

(Please tick)

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

- residential uses
- tourist accommodation
- small industry
- farm crafts
- sport and recreation
- other (please specify)

5. Have you already converted farm buildings to non-farm uses?

If yes, please give details.

6. If you have developed tourist accommodation please specify the type of accommodation established:

(Please tick)

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

- holiday home
- self catering flats
- bunkhouse/ camping barn
- bothy
- other (please specify).



7. Specify any particular reasons for not wanting to convert buildings and develop alternative enterprises:

(Please tick)

☐  
☐  
☐  
☐

- social problems e.g. with tourists
- financial reasons
- business reasons e.g. lack of time
- other (please specify).

8. Do you see any of the following as specific constraints on converting and re-using farm buildings?

(Please tick)

☐  
☐

- planning controls
- designated areas e.g. National Park etc.  
(Please Specify)

☐  
☐  
☐  
☐

- 'listed building' status
- high interest rates and cashflow
- government and EEC farm policy
- other (please specify)

9. Which of the following factors is most likely to encourage you to convert redundant farm buildings?

(Please tick)

☐

- opportunity to raise the farms productivity

☐

- increased financial aid for conversion work e.g. by Ministry of Agriculture

☐

- increased technical aid e.g. for building or marketing work

☐

- reduction in the profitability of farming.

☐

- demand for conversions e.g. by the tourist industry.

10. What do you see as the most important consideration when conserving and re-using redundant traditional farm buildings?

(Please tick)

☐  
☐  
☐  
☐

- landscape conservation
- benefits to the local economy
- profit earning potential
- others (please specify)

11. Are you confident of sustaining your income from agriculture alone?

12. Do you envisage non-farm ventures being an important part of the farm business in the future?

13. Any other comments on the issues raised in the questionnaire?

Please give the following information:

(Please Tick)

14. Type of farm :

- arable .....
- mixed .....
- livestock .....
- other (please specify) .....


15. Size of farm (acres).

16. In what area do you live?

(Please Tick)

17. Age:

- less than 20 years.....
- 20 to 40 years.....
- 40 to 60 years.....
- more than 60 years.....


THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP

PLEASE RETURN THE COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE SAE ENCLOSED.



## Appendix C      Local Planning Authority Questionnaires

A survey of local authority planning departments was necessary as a 'balance' to the farmer survey. This sought to look at the issues from a policy makers and planning control angle rather than from the consumers point of view. The relatively standardised planning policies and practices mean that a postal questionnaire is feasible, all planning authorities having a similar basis for their responses.

As with the farmer survey, pilot surveys were carried out in summer 1989 in the Dartmoor and North York Moors areas. These were followed by the main survey of all but the most peripheral Pennine LPA's during summer 1990. This included:

29 District Councils (map 2.3)

7 County Councils

3 National Parks

Selection was achieved by consulting maps of local authority areas and defining which covered the survey area. Partial coverage was usually acceptable, except in the areas indicated in appendix A. An SAE and covering letter accompanied each questionnaire.

The following usable returns were obtained:

District Council Planning Authorities	21 = 72%
County Council Planning Authorities	4 = 57%
National Park Planning Authorities	2 = 67%
	Total = 69%

Taking account of overlap, these returns gave the following regional response, for District and National Park Planning Authorities i.e. those directly involved in policy implementation affecting TFBs:

Cheviot - 5 questionnaires, 4 returns= 75%

North Pennines - 3 questionnaires, 2 returns= 67%

Yorkshire Dales - 5 questionnaires, 4 returns= 75%

South Pennines - 11 questionnaires, 7 returns= 64%

Peak - 8 questionnaires, 6 returns= 75% (1 anonymous)

Obviously there is overlap between the borders of the areas (as defined in chapter 2) and the administrative areas. The districts were simply allocated to the area in which the majority of their surface area fell.

The major problems associated with the survey were connected with inadequate answers to in-depth and open-ended questions. In addition, there was considerable variation in the quality and extent of data given to questions 10, 11 and 12. Consequently comparisons were difficult to make. Problems with data included non-availability and difficulty of retrieval.

The following is an example of the covering letters which accompanied the LPA questionnaires:

County Planning Officer,  
County Hall,  
Topsham Road,  
Exeter,  
EX2 4QD.

Roger Lawson,  
Planning Research,  
Dept. of Town and  
Country Planning,  
Newcastle University,  
Newcastle upon Tyne,  
NE1 7RU.

Dear Sir,

I am carrying out a doctoral research project at Newcastle University Planning Department, into the conservation and conversion of traditional agricultural buildings.

As part of the research I am conducting a postal survey of the local authorities in the upland areas. In this context your cooperation would be much appreciated, in completing the enclosed questionnaire

I am concentrating on the uplands and would thus be grateful if you could consider this when answering the questions. I do appreciate that it may prove difficult to separate upland and lowland data and have structured the questions accordingly.

Any data supplied would go into a PhD thesis with limited public access.

Yours faithfully,

Roger Lawson.



The following is an example of the questionnaire sent to LPAs. Some modifications were made on this basic layout to take account of their differing roles and responsibilities.

SURVEY OF CONSERVATION AND CONVERSIONS OF REDUNDANT  
TRADITIONAL AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS

1. Name of department and District Council?

2. Plans and Policies:

- Do Local Plans/ Subject Plans in the District contain specific policies or guidances on the re-use and conversion of traditional agricultural buildings? (If yes, please specify pages, policy numbers, sections etc...)

- Has the District Council produced any other documentation related to the conservation and conversion of traditional agricultural buildings? For example design guides. (If yes, please specify title, dates etc.)

3. Does the District Council have a specific officer whose work encompasses the conservation and conversion of traditional agricultural buildings? (If so, please specify the title)

4. Of the following, please list the three most important factors to the District Council when considering conservation and conversion of traditional farm buildings. (Please rank in order of importance, from 1 to 11) (1 = most important)

Please Rank

a - landscape conservation.....	___
b - architectural conservation.....	___
c - creating tourist accommodation.....	___
d - generating additional local housing.....	___
e - generating employment.....	___
f - increasing the demand for local services.....	___
g - increased wealth in the region.....	___
h - attracting industry/workshops.....	___
i - preventing dereliction.....	___
j - supporting/ diversifying farm incomes.....	___
k - others (please specify).....	___

5. How have recent changes in government policy aimed at encouraging farm diversification (e.g. 'Farm Diversification Scheme' and Department of the Environment circular 16/87) affected the Council's attitude to planning applications for conversions and re-uses of traditional farm buildings for non agricultural uses?

more sympathetic - ☐  
 less sympathetic - ☐ (please tick)  
 no change in policy - ☐

6. Have any other organisations been influential in promoting farm diversification and conversions to the council? If yes, please name them (e.g. ADAS).

7. Assuming no major changes in the external appearance, what type of re-use would the District Council normally favour for traditional agricultural buildings?

agricultural - ☐  
 non agricultural, residential - ☐ (please tick)  
 non agricultural, non residential - ☐  
 no firm views - ☐

8. Would the District Council prefer to see traditional agricultural buildings preserved for their own sake, if the alternative was dereliction or demolition?

9. If major changes to the external appearance of a traditional agricultural building were proposed for a development, would the District Council normally presume against granting permission even if the alternative was dereliction or demolition?

10. Does the District Council have any figures on the number of applications for conversions of farm buildings, in the District? If so please give details below or enclose the relevant data:

1979	1983	1987
1980	1984	1988
1981	1985	1989
1982	1986	1990



11. Does the District Council have records on the end uses for conversions of agricultural buildings? If so, please give figures for the main types of re-uses, or enclose the relevant data.

12. Does the District Council have figures for the numbers of listed agricultural buildings in the District? Please specify.

13. Which of the following designations are most likely to encourage the conservation and conversion of redundant traditional agricultural buildings? (Please rank in order of importance, from 1 to 10) ( 1 = most important)

Please Rank

- a - Rural Development Area.....
- b - Conservation Area.....
- c - Less Favoured Area.....
- d - National Park.....
- e - Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.....
- f - Listed Buildings.....
- g - Environmentally Sensitive Areas.....
- h - Area of Great Landscape Value.....
- i - Ancient Monument.....
- j - Others (please specify).....

14. State briefly why the District Council regards the chosen designations as the most important in terms of conservation and conversion.

15. Are there any other specific designations/ controls in the district likely to influence the conservation and conversion of traditional farm buildings? Please give details of designations, areas, dates etc..

16. What further measures would the Council see as aiding the farm diversification process, via the conservation and conversion of traditional agricultural buildings? Please list the three most important:

- a - relaxing planning controls on conversions to non farm uses
- b - introducing planning controls on alterations to different agricultural uses
- c - increased financial aid for diversification projects involving farm buildings e.g. Rural Development Commission
- d - cutting aid aimed at encouraging maximum farm output
- e - increased areas designated as 'Rural Development Areas'
- f - further or extended designated areas e.g. AONB, Nat. Park
- g - improved infrastructure in the area (roads, buses etc...)
- h - improved technical advice to farmers about how to go about converting buildings and running alternative enterprises
- i - modification of farm tenancy restrictions on conversions
- j - others (please specify)

1 -	<input type="checkbox"/>	(most important)
2 -	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3 -	<input type="checkbox"/>	(third most important)

17. Does the Council have access to any sources of finance which could be put into conservation and conversion work? (Please specify)

18. Based on applications recieved, does land ownership (tenants - owner occupied) influence the use and attitudes towards traditional farm buildings? How does this influence manifest itself?

19. Is there evidence of 'abuse of the system' in the area? (e.g false claims of building redundancy) Please elaborate.

20. Any other comments.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP

Please return the completed questionnaire in the SAE provided.



## Appendix D      Interviews

The following is a schedule of the interviews conducted throughout the period of research:

### Interview 1

Dennis Connor 'Barns Development Officer' (joint Countryside Commission and Youth Hostels Association post). Date, 20/3/89. Location, Manchester.

### Interview 2

Graham Taylor 'Regional Officer' for the Countryside Commission. Date, 23/4/90. Location, Newcastle.

### Interview 3

Mr Haslam 'Regional Secretary' for the Country Landowners Association. Date, 2/5/90. Location, Bellingham.

### Interview 4

Susan Marshall 'Development Officer' for the Northumbria Tourist Board. Date 3/5/90. Location, Durham.

### Interview 5

Elizabeth Courage, farmer. Date 11/7/90. Location, Slaley (Northumberland).

### Interview 6

Mr Penrose 'Agent' for the Chatsworth Estate. Date 14/8/90. Location, Derbyshire.

### Interview 7

Arthur Brazel 'Rural Enterprise Advisor' for the Agricultural Development and Advisory Service (ADAS). Date 16/8/90. Location, Northallerton.

### Interview 8

Brian Heyes 'Agent' for the Bolton Abbey Estate. Date 17/8/90. Location, Bolton Abbey (Yorkshire Dales).

### Interview 9

Mr Wilson 'Agent' for the Northumberland Estate. Date 21/8/90. Location, Alnwick.

### Interview 10

Alistair Stevens 'Rural Enterprise Advisor' for ADAS Northumberland section. Date 5/9/90. Location, Newcastle.

### Interview 11

Peter Watson 'Development Control Officer' for Yorkshire Dales National Park. Date 11/10/90. Location, Bainbridge (Yorkshire Dales).

**Interview 12**

Adam Menuge 'Barns and Walls Conservation Officer' for the Yorkshire Dales National Park. Date 11/10/90. Location, Bainbridge (Yorkshire Dales).

**Interview 13**

Development Control Officer Tynedale District Council. Date 31/10/90. Location, Hexham (Northumberland).

**Interview 14**

'Rural Development Programme' Project Officer. Date 26/11/90. Location, Newcastle.

**Interview 15**

The farmer 'Bishop Field Farm'. Date 3/12/90. Location, Hexham, Northumberland.

Interviews were based around a pre-structured set of questions, giving a flexible base for the interviews. The period of interviewing was spread evenly throughout the research work. Interviews were both part of a pre-planned strategy and a reaction to ideas formulated during research work.

Consultations were also held with the following: ADAS; RDC; National Park; Peak District National Park; farmers; Rural Community Councils and National Farmers Union.



## Appendix E      Site Visits

A series of site visits took place throughout the period of research. The purpose being both case study research, and to investigate specific aspects of the subject.

11/8/89

Bardon Mill Field Trip. Studied Bothies, Bastles and general vernacular in the South Tyne and Allen vallies.

21/8/89

Yorkshire Dales. Studied conversions to non-agicultural uses, adaptation for continued farm use and general vernacular architecture.

13/9/89

South Tyne Valley. Vernacular architecture studied over a section from Alston to Garrigill.

8/12/89

'New Uses for Agricultural Land'. Conference organised by the RTPI. Venue, London.

20/6/90

North Yorkshire Moors. Field trip to 4 diversified farms, around Pickering.

7/90

Blagdon, Northumberland. Visit to converted workshops, 'Milkhope Centre'.

11/7/90

Slaley, Northumberland. Visit to Ryehill Farm, converted to tourist accommodation.

8/90

Tynedale District, Northumberland. Visits to major conversions: hotel and residential.

14-15/

Chatsworth, Derbyshire. Visits to residential and non-8/90 residential conversions.

17/8/90

Bolton Abbey, Yorkshire. Visits to residential and commercial conversions, agricultural re-use and general vernacular sites.

27/11/90

Tynedale District, Northumberland. Visits to actual and proposed residential conversions, also commercial conversions.

29/11/90

'Old Farm Buildings in a New Countryside: Redundancy, Conservation and Conversion in the 1990's'. Conference organised by the Historic Farm Buildings Group in association with English Heritage and the RICS. Venue, London.

3/12/90

Haydon Bridge, Northumberland. Visit to farm converted to hotel, Bishopfield.

15/12/90

Allenheads, Northumberland. Visit to community project which includes farm building conversions.

4/4/91

Bolton Abbey, Wensleydale, Swaledale. Visit to conversions and to study aspects of vernacular architecture.



## Appendix F      Camping Barn Feasibility Study

Camping Barn Feasibility Study: Clark House Farm (SD 617436)

### INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

Overnight fee £1.75 (£1.52 excluding VAT), YHA takes 50p administrative fee. Total conversion costs £8000 minus 25% grant= £6000 plus £500 equipment.

Projected occupancy rates year 1 (20%) year 2 (24%) year 3 (28%). These figures were based on experience from the Peak camping barns.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
<b>OUTPUT</b>			
15 persons x 210 nights x 20% (630 bednights) x £1.52 (ie £1.75 including VAT)	£958		
15 persons x 365 nights x 24% (1533 bednights) x £1.52		£1997	
15 persons x 365 nights x 28% (1533 bednights) x £1.52			£2330
<b>COSTS</b>			
Marketing, booking and administration £0.50/night	271	565	659
Cleaning materials, maintenance and renewals	45	85	100
Water Rate	45	90	110
Insurance	40	40	40
Rates	142	142	142
	---	---	---
	543	922	1051
Margin after 15% financial charge on overdraft	-234	65	179
Balance: Opening	-6500	-6734	-6669
Closing	-6734	-6669	-6390

At this rate the pay back period is 13 years. Thus consultants recommended an increase in overnight charges to £1.90 or reduced administration fees from 50p to 30p. This would be sufficient to reduce the payback period to 7 years (MAFF 1989c p16).

## Appendix G Farm Diversification Scheme Data

Data for the Farm Diversification Scheme (chapter 6) gives an indication of the types of conversion that are occurring. Obviously not all developments are included. Nor do the majority of approved schemes involve conversion. However, a substantial minority of schemes do involve conversion, particularly the tourist accommodation option which was so popular (FDS capital grants for tourist accommodation have now been discontinued).

FARM DIVERSIFICATION GRANT SCHEME (CAPITAL GRANTS)  
NUMBERS OF APPROVED APPLICATIONS FOR EACH ENTERPRISE (SINCE 1.1.88)

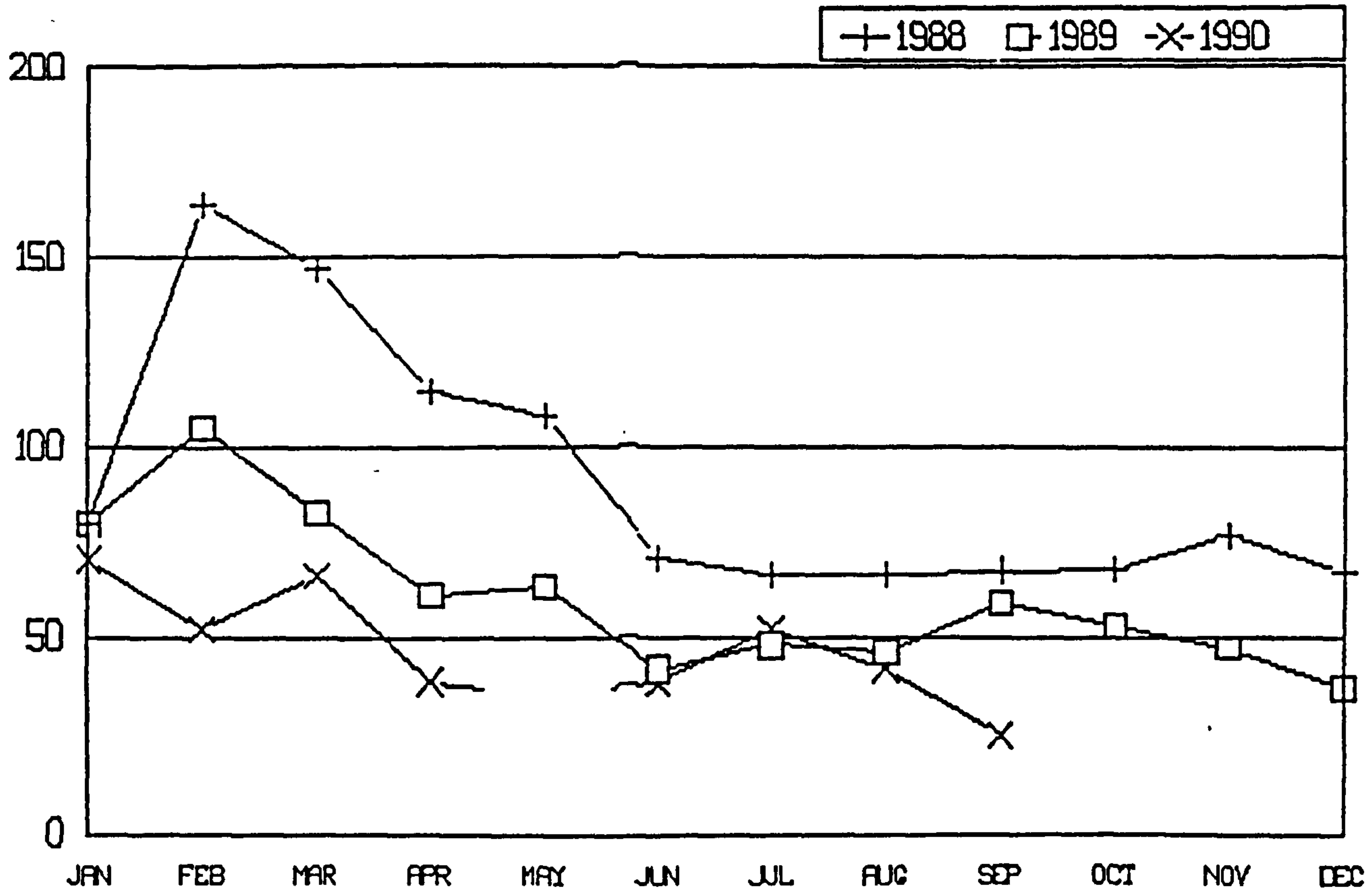
		ENGLAND	REST OF UK
1. MANUFACTURE OF CRAFT ITEMS		22	5
2. FOOD PROCESSING	DAIRY	102	11
	MEATS	33	8
	VEGETABLES	12	-
	FISH	7	-
	DRINKS	16	2
	OTHER	11	2
3. TIMBER PROCESSING		11	6
4. NON FOOD-AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE		26	6
5. REPAIR OF AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY		11	11
6. FARM SHOPS	FOOD	139	14
	OTHER	39	13
7. PICK-YOUR-OWN SALES		22	5
8. ACCOMMODATION	SERVICED	237	64
	SELF-CATERING	429	187
	CARAVANNING	70	24
	CAMPING SITES	10	4
	CAMPING & BUNKHOUSE BARNs	15	1
9. CATERING	RESTAURANT	28	7
	OTHER	40	5
10. RECREATION AND EDUCATION	FISHING	146	25
	SPORTS	30	13
	PLAY AREAS	16	7
	LEISURE PARKS	11	1
	FARM VISITORS	75	5
	ENVIRONMENTAL FACILITIES	18	12
	OTHER	38	10
11. HORSES	LIVERY	208	35
	FOR HIRE (LFA ONLY)	7	4
12. LETTING OF ENTERPRISES	FARM UNITS (1-5)	60	-
	FARM SHOPS (6)	1	-
	CATERING (9)	1	-
	ACCOMMODATION	-	4
	RECREATION/EDUCATION	1	-
	OTHER	5	-
TOTAL ENTERPRISES		1897	492

Note that some enterprises are counted under more than one category.  
The totals are therefore greater than the actual number of approvals.



Applications for the FDS have waned since the inception of the scheme with some inevitable levelling off after early enthusiasm for the new scheme. The fall may also be due to the continuing agricultural recession, saturation of certain markets and greater realism over the merits of diversification.

FDGS:(CAPITAL GRANTS) APPLICATIONS RECEIVED DURING EACH MONTH OF THE SCHEME



Data from the FDS also gives an indication of the wider benefits of diversification (and by implication, conversion) in terms of employment generation and the involvement of young farmers. Field evidence suggested that conversion schemes tend to be more common amongst middle aged farmers.

**FARM DIVERSIFICATION GRANT SCHEME**

(CAPITAL GRANTS): MONTHLY REPORT TO END OF

SEPTEMBER 1990

	ENGLAND				WALES*			
	1988/89	1989/90	1990/91 (to date)	This Month	1988/89	1989/90	1990/91 (to date)	This Month
NO OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED	1362	644	232	25	209	135	62	N/A
NO OF APPLICATIONS APPROVED	823	584	215	30	153	101	58	N/A
OF WHICH YOUNG FARMERS	63	39	15	4	8	6	2	N/A
NO OF ADDITIONAL PAID EMPLOYEES	897	482	167	26	115	40	24	N/A
	1988/89	1989/90	1990/91	1991 Onwards	1988/89	1989/90	1990/91	1991 Onwards
GRANT COMMITMENT (ie APPROVED) (£'000)	3,580	2,918	1,609	316	662	460	426	
GRANT PAID (£'000)	520	2,281	1,222	-	33	313	145	-
ESTIMATED OUTTURN FOR CURRENT YEAR (£'000)			3,007				N/A	

	ENGLAND	SCOTLAND	WALES*	N IRELAND
AVERAGE GRANT- AIDABLE INVESTMENT (£)	20,426	16,445	22,574	29,362
AVERAGE NON-GRANT- AIDABLE INVESTMENT (£)	6,462	3,747	6,467	1,175
TOTAL AVERAGE OVERALL INVESTMENT (£)	26,888	20,192	29,041	30,537

\* Welsh figures to 31.8.90

The first three months of 1988 are included in the 1988/9 financial year for monitoring purposes.



A more accurate reflection of the applicability of FDS data to the thesis can be gained by looking at regional data, particularly that for the northern region.

Division	Approved Capital Grants 1988-1990	Total Planned Investment 1988-1990 (£000)
Beverley *	56	975
Carlise *	53	1123
Newcastle *	63	962
Northallerton *	88	2120
Crewe	90	1793
Nottingham	56	1347
Worcester	68	1553
Preston *	51	981
Lincoln	33	570
Chelmsford	50	1395
Huntingdon	35	670
Norwich	71	1679
Guildford	51	1205
Maidstone	100	2404
Oxford	63	1321
Exeter	93	4128
Gloucester	123	2970
Taunton	108	2292
Truro	94	2434
Total (England)	1446	31922

The five areas marked with an asterisk (\*) cover the majority of the Pennine region. As such it is useful to consider them in isolation.

The numbers of approved schemes are largely similar to the national average. The northern region accounted for 22% of approved schemes and covers 25% of the land area. The level of interest in diversification (conversion) in the Pennines would thus seem to be similar to the national level, but their financial value is less.

The 5 areas covering the Pennines had a total of 311 approved grants between 1988 and 1990, giving a total planned investment of £6 161 000. This gives a mean capital grant of £19 810, compared with a figure of £22 073 for England as a whole.



## Appendix H      Listed Farm Buildings

In the survey of listed farm buildings, one district was taken as a representative for each of the regions:

Alnwick: Cheviot  
 Wear Valley: North Pennines  
 Craven: Dales  
 Pendle: South Pennines  
 Derbyshire Dales: Peak

Selection was based on both academic considerations and practical reasons, such as accessibility.

The method of study involved searching through the listing for the entire district and picking out the farm buildings. On occasions it was difficult to identify farm buildings from the descriptions provided, so some error was inevitable. Information for Craven and Pendle Districts was provided by the LPAs. Pendle District did not distinguish grade 2\* buildings so an estimate was made, based on percentages from other districts.

The following is a breakdown of the regional results:

	Grade	Number	Densities number/km <sup>2</sup>
Alnwick: Cheviot	1	0	
	2*	5	217/1080 = 0.20
	2	212	
Wear Valley: North Pennines	1	0	
	2*	8	109/505 = 0.22
	2	101	
Craven: Dales	1	0	
	2*	7	387/1176 = 0.33
	2	380	
Pendle: South Pennines	1	0	
	2*	2	77/168 = 0.46
	2	75	
Derbyshire Dales: Peak	1	0	
	2*	7	188/795 = 0.24
	2	181	

**Type of Listed Farm Building**

Types of listed farm buildings were calculated for a sample of parishes in Derbyshire Dales and Tynedale Districts, giving an indication of the types of buildings present:

Derbyshire Dales		Tynedale	
Farmhouse	110	Farmhouse	55
Barns	51	Barn	40
Stable	23	Other	11
Cowhouse	6		
Other	8		

As part of the case study, a more detailed survey was conducted of listed farm buildings in Tynedale District. In total there were three grade 1 buildings, twelve grade 2\* and four hundred and fifty five grade 2 buildings. This gave a density of 0.21 l.b./km<sup>2</sup> (Tynedale District = 2220 km<sup>2</sup>). Map 8.1 shows that there was wide variation around this average, with northern areas of the district having very few listed farm buildings. Calculation of standard deviation gives a measure of the spatial variation within the region.

e.g.    Mean density for the 50 parishes = 0.335 l.b./km<sup>2</sup>  
          Sum of densities for 50 parishes = 16.75 l.b./km<sup>2</sup>  
          Standard deviation = 0.30

Finally an investigation was made into the types of outstanding listed farm buildings (grade 1 and 2\*) in Tynedale District, which are as follows:

**Grade 1**

Willimontswick Farmhouse  
Aydon Castle and attached farm buildings  
Snabdaugh Farmhouse

**Grade 2\***

High Meadows House Barn  
Willimontswick farm buildings  
Hole Bastle  
Swinburne Castle Stable  
Causeway House and loose box  
Barn NW of Burncliffe  
Stables at Spital  
Dotland Park Farmhouse  
Overacres Farm  
Black Middens Bastle  
Gatehouse Bastle  
Humshaugh Farmhouse



## **Appendix I      The Direct Economic Benefits of Conversion**

The following calculation draws on primary and secondary material to calculate the annual direct income from farm building conversion in the Pennines.

The wide variations in types of conversion and income levels make it difficult to calculate an aggregate figure. For this reason the calculation does not consider economic benefits from business operations in converted buildings where they have been sold or rented out. Nor does it consider the issue of indirect financial benefits.

## Residential Conversion

A fundamental consideration is whether buildings are sold prior to conversion, or after conversion. Research suggests the following:

93 % sold prior to conversion (with planning permission), 7 % sold after conversion

Sources: Eden, Tynedale and Alnwick District Planning Authorities

Research suggests that £76 000 is a representative average price, for a sale with planning permission, with £160 000 being the figure for sale in a converted form.

Sources: Tynedale District Council Planning Department, Bolton Abbey Estate, Manby 1991, Watkins and Winter 1988.

The survey of 300 Pennine farmers yielded 14 cases of residential conversion. The usable return of 111 constituted 3% of the total number of farmers in the region (3599).

Thus  $3\% = 14$ ,  $1\% = 14/3$ ,  $100\% = 14/3 \times 100 = 467$

This gives 467 cases of residential conversion in the Pennines, but evidence suggests that there are upto 1.6 units per residential conversion (Fig 6.10). Thus  $1.6 \times 467 = 747$ . It is deduced that there are an estimated 747 units of residential conversions in the Pennines survey area. This gives the following calculation for the various options described:

Sale prior to conversion generates  $747/100 \times 93\% = 695$  cases, generating an income of  $695 \times £76\,000 = £52\,820\,000$ .

Sale after conversion generates  $747/100 \times 7\% = 52$  cases.  
This generates an income of  $52 \times £160\,000 = £8\,320\,000$ .

Grand Total  $£52\,820\,000 + £8\,320\,000 = £61\,140\,000$

To stand comparison with the other conversion options it is necessary to consider the annual income from residential conversion. Evidence suggests that most conversion has occurred in the last 10 years. Thus as a crude estimate residential conversions generate:

$£61\,140\,000/10 = £6\,114\,000$  per annum

Sources: Pennines survey, Tynedale, Burnley and South Lakeland District Planning Authorities.



## Tourist Accommodation Conversion

The Pennine survey identified 6 cases of tourist accommodation:

4 Self-catering (67%), 1 Bed and Breakfast (17%) and 1 Camping Barn (17%).

This suggests that the total number of facilities in the survey area would be:  $6/3 \times 100 = 200$ . This total is divided into the following categories:

Self-catering  $200/100 \times 67 = 134$  facilities  
 Bed and Breakfast  $200/100 \times 17 = 34$  facilities  
 Camping and Bunkhouse Barn  $200/100 \times 17 = 34$  facilities

N.B. These figures conflict with the findings of other authors. For instance Davies (1983) found that Bed and Breakfast (26%) accounted for a higher percentage of all farm tourist accommodation facilities than did Self-catering (18%). This discrepancy can be explained by the fact that most Bed and Breakfasts do not involve conversion.

Mean net annual income for Self-catering = £1201 (1981 prices), at 54.1% inflation between 1981 and 1990 = £1851

Mean net annual income for Bed and Breakfast = £568 (1981 prices), at 54.1% inflation between 1981 and 1990 = £875

Sources: Central Gov. Stats. Office 1991 and Davies 1983.

Evidence from field work and from the Countryside Commission report on Peak District Camping Barns (1986) suggests a mean net annual income £465 for Camping and Bunkhouse Barns.

Taking account of the estimated numbers of the various types of accommodation, the following net annual incomes can be postulated:

Self-catering  $134 \times £1851 = £248\,034$   
 Bed and Breakfast  $34 \times £875 = £29\,750$   
 Camping Barn/ Bunkhouse Barn  $34 \times £465 = £15\,810$

Total =  $£248\,034 + £29\,750 + £15\,810 = £293\,594$

## Business Conversion

These calculations are based on rental values of business conversions. Many farmers decide to run businesses themselves but this is not included in this calculation. Because too few examples were identified in the Pennines to enable estimation and in addition, the huge variations in such businesses make generalisation difficult.

Mean rents for business conversions are around £2.50 per sq ft (Sources: RDC Business Advisory Service, RDC 1986, Wilkinson 1987).

Number of business conversions in the survey = 5. Based on this there are an estimated 167 cases of business conversion in the Pennines. Bearing in mind the significant number of units at some of the case studies (chapter 6), total numbers could be much greater.

The huge variations in the scale of business conversions and their relative scarcity make evaluation difficult to make. The following calculation is based on mean rental and unit size information obtained from the RDC in Northumberland and Craven/ Richmondshire Districts respectively.

£2.50 x 1623 sq ft (mean unit size) = £4058 (mean income)  
 £4058 x 167 cases = £677 686



## Summary

Adding the annual direct incomes for residential, tourist accommodation and business together gives a grand total of:

$$£6\,114\,000 + £293\,594 + £677\,686 = £7\,085\,280$$

The validity of this figure needs to be considered. A first consideration is the reliability of the use of 'Yellow Pages' to sample the farming industry. It is generally accepted that this source does provide an accurate measure of the number of farms. For example, Errington (1985) estimated that 86% of farms were listed in the 'Yellow Pages', although he did admit that the figure could be somewhat lower in areas where part-time farming was common, such as the Pennines. Taking Errington's estimate the revised figure for the total Pennine sample would be:

$$3599/86 \times 100 = 4185 \text{ farms}$$

Using these figures it is possible to regard the previously calculated grand total (£7 085 280) as representing 86% of the real figure. Thus a revised figure could be:

$$£7\,085\,280/86 \times 100 = £8\,238\,698$$

The calculated direct annual income from the conversion of TFBs in the Pennines is thus in excess of £8.2 million per annum.

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